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The Icelandic Canadian



SEVENTH and EIGHTH VOLUMES
1948 to 1950



A Quarterly Magazine
Published By The Icelandic Canadian Club
Winnipeg, Manitoba

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The Icelandic Canadian

Vol. 7

Winnipeg, Man., Autumn 1948

No. 1

EDITORIAL

It has been suggested to me as a new member of the editorial board of this magazine, that I set forth the reasons why I am prepared to take the time and trouble that necessarily is involved in such membership. On such a topic there are many things to be said, and I shall be pleased to say some of them.

Long before the Icelandic Canadian started publication, I felt keenly the need of some such English language periodical, or at least an English section in our Icelandic weeklies. Much as the latter have done and are doing for the honored pioneer generation, one must admit that they are not able to reach the great majority of Icelandic Canadians, or Icelandic Americans, of the second and third generations who speak and read English only.

These people need such a magazine as this, "to assist in making the things of value in our Icelandic heritage, which are many and varied, a living part of ourselves as Canadian citizens". (This quotation is taken from the statement of policy of the Icelandic Canadian, issue of December, 1942.)

Our magazine can do much to explain to our ever-expanding racial group in America this rich racial background, from the modern Republic of Iceland, right back to the glory that was the Saga Age. "Know thyself" is as important to us to-day as it was to the Greeks of old, and to understand ourselves we must understand the tree of which we are the branch.

I feel also that The Icelandic Canadian has an important function to per-

form in solidifying our racial group and so through unity help us to make our maximum contribution to the new civilization arising here. It can serve as the banner of our little group at the super-convention of the many and large racial groups that convene on this fair continent. Its function, as of other banners, is both to unite and inspire us, as well as to show other people, who and what we are. Perhaps the time will come when some of the articles in this magazine may be picked up by some of our many "Digests", and by them placed before their millions of readers as part of their mental diet.

And this little magazine, now six years old, how has it been doing? I think that anyone joining the staff now can feel that he is associating himself with a successful venture. Judging from its circulation and from the many letters of appreciation from all over this continent and from Iceland, it is doing not badly at all. It has published many articles of merit on topics relating to Icelandic culture. It has gathered news of what has been well done by people of Icelandic extraction, proving that we can and do make quite a contribution on the new soil to which we have been transplanted. Some of these news may become important source material to historians of the future.

One distinctive feature of the Icelandic Canadian is its lack of commercialism in a materialistic age. — Whereas most publications on this continent are based on large financial resources and are more or less devoted to

the profit motive, this magazine of ours was started on the proverbial shoestring and is dedicated to service without profit. Any earnings made are devoted to the turning out of a better article. It is truly a labor of love — the kind of labor where the Icelander is at his best. Not only is there no share dividend for

anyone, there is even no pay. Those who are now carrying on the work, and those who in the past helped the infant magazine take its first faltering steps, have all worked on a purely voluntary basis. With such people I am pleased to be associated in such a venture. Halldor J. Stefansson

Letters of Appreciation

Last fall when Agnes Rothery (Pratt) was preparing her book "Iceland" which is reviewed elsewhere in this issue, she wrote to The Icelandic Canadian for material, and a full set of the magazine to date, together with a copy of Iceland's Thousand Years, was sent to her.

It is gratifying to note that Mrs. Pratt has received inspiration for her writing from the history and literature of Iceland as it is interpreted in Iceland's Thousand Years. The spirit she has put into her book is nowhere as evident as in her chapter "Individualists and Independence", and this chapter is based to a large extent on Iceland's Thousand Years with numerous items and quotations taken directly from three of its lectures, namely, "The Dark Ages in Iceland", "Hallgrímur Petursson", and "Freedom and Progress".

The following letter of appreciation has been received by Mrs. Holmfridur Danielson, from Mrs. Pratt:

"I have instructed the publishers to send you a copy of **Iceland**, as of course I want you and your husband to own a book in whose production you helped so much."

Sincerely yours,

Agnes Rothery



The following letter was received by

Rev. V. J. Eylands shortly before he left Iceland:

Dear Sir,

Having finished the book "Iceland's Thousand Years", and having recognized your name as one of the lecturers I want to take this opportunity to express my appreciation of the fine workmanship that went into the compilation of the subject matter.

"Iceland's Thousand Years", edited by Skuli Johnson, is the best book about Iceland, its geography, the people, their history and arts, and great men, that I have ever read.

The various subjects are presented in clear, concise and readable manner, not only informative but also interesting. It is much more than a travel book and yet covers the subjects in such a way that one becomes so interested that he has to dig deeper into the subjects because of aroused curiosity.

Ever since reading this book I have been recommending it to my American friends, and can do so without qualification. In short, it was one of my lucky days that I happened upon this book and will treasure it always as one of my best souvenirs of the "Land of Ice and Fire."

Sincerely,

Joseph M. Geraghty,
Engineer Supply-IAC
Keflavíkur flugvöllur
Keflavik, Iceland

PROF. SKULI JOHNSON:

Einar Hjörleifsson Kvaran in Winnipeg

A lecture delivered April 21, 1947, at the Icelandic Canadian Evening School

On the 28th of May, 1938, there was borne to burial in the capital of Iceland one of the chief personages in the cultural history of the country: Einar Gísli Hjörleifson Kvaran. A brief but adequate obituary notice of him appeared on that date in **Nýja Dagblaðið** by Jónas Jónsson frá Hriflu, later published in his volume entitled **Merkir Samtíðarmenn**. As Jónsson remarked, Kvaran was at once a poet, a dramatist, a novelist, a journalist and a politician and an effective advocate of various ethical and sociological ideas. In the following year the novelist Guðmundur Hagalín briefly appraised in **Skírnir** the ethical implications of his stories. Stefan Einarsson contributed a chronology of him in **Eimreiðin**. A full length consideration of Kvaran's literary and sociological significance is, however, still to be written.

1.

Kvaran was born at Goðdalir, Skagafjarðarsýsla, Dec. 6, 1859, a son of the manse. He was named for his grandfather the Rev. Einar Hjörleifsson. His father was the Rev. Hjörleifur Einarsen, a prominent clergyman who for many years lived in Vatnsdal in Húnvatnssýsla. His writings showed a great sense of responsibility for his fellowmen; he was an organizing force among the clergy of his region, and he had a deep interest in spiritualism. In his obituary notice of him in **Breiðablik**, Rev. F. J. Bergmann tells of him, in his old age, translating a difficult book of three hundred pages on religion,

from English into Icelandic. To these characteristics of his father Einar undoubtedly fell heir. He was also early affected by the natural beauty of the Vatnsdal district which is one of the loveliest in Iceland. The country-lad's shy and sensitive nature is often evidenced in Einar's writings, and his self-effacing manner and frequent employment of understatement stem from the same source. Jónson observed that Einar was the embodiment of gentle beauty and probably would have preferred to spend his life in the delightful surroundings of a lovely and indolent Lotusland but that, paradoxically, he was fated to be a fighter for diverse causes and to spend his days as the storm-centre of contending factions. To the present writer Einar seemed not so much a legendary lotus-eater as a modern Ulysses, roving widely over the ways of thought, who could at his journey's end truthfully say that he was a part of all that he had met. He might have made his own Descartes' famous dictum **Cogito ergo sum** ("I think, therefore I am") for sweet reasonableness was essentially his method and his manner, and fortified with triple brass that breast assuredly had to be that was not to succumb, at least for the time being, to the persuasiveness of Einar's pleas. Again, in his general attitude to mankind, Einar might have applied to himself Terence's well-known line which he himself once cited in an appreciation of Matthias Jochumsson: **Homo sum, nil humanum alienum a me puto** ("I am a man, no-

thing that affects humanity deem I alien to me").

2.

Einar Kvaran graduated from the College of Iceland (1881) and took later (1882) the cand. phil. examination at the University of Copenhagen, where he subsequently studied for some time the subject of economics. He was not an outstanding student, but his stay at Copenhagen introduced him directly to the influence of George Brandes and the realism for which he stood. Hagalin, in his article mentioned above, summarizes carefully Kvaran's relationship with this movement. "Never did the viewpoint have any thorough-going influence on Einar Kvaran, if one may judge from his creative writings. He never surrendered himself uncritically to it, as a great number of Norse writers did during these years. But realism gave an impetus to his scepticism and to his contempt for hypocrisy and sanctimony, and promoted in him freedom of thought. Moreover, the artistic finish which accompanied this movement enhanced Einar's capacity as craftsman. Einar, further during his college days, became acquainted with various social movements which were then coming to the fore, and these movements undoubtedly augmented Einar's sympathy for the lowly, and lie at the basis of the stern strictures of this otherwise cautious and kindly soul in regard to injustice, callousness and unscrupulous covetousness. It cannot be denied that in one of his poems he shows that evolution and Darwinism were not uncongenial to him".

3.

When Kvaran came to Canada (1885) he was already established as one of the

promising young men of the **Verðandi** group to which periodical (1882) he had contributed a novelette in epistolary form: **Upp og Niður** ("Up and Down"). Before this Einar had written two short stories: **You are a Humbug Sir in Heimdallur** and **Hvern Eiðinn á jeg að Rjúfa?** ("Which Oath Ought I to Break?") published at **Eskifirði** (1880). Again Einar had written a discerning introduction to a new edition of the poems of Bjarni Thorarensen (1884) which still stands as testimony to his early critical acumen. During his ten years' stay in Winnipeg (till April 8, 1895) Kvaran had countless opportunities for exercising and augmenting his talents. He has himself noted this period as very significant in his own development; recalling his earlier stay in Canada he wrote in his account of his second American visit in 1908 (**Vesturför—ferðapistlar**, Akureyri, 1909, p. 46): "There had there (i.e. in Canada) coursed over my mind doubts about everything, so to speak, of which I had previously been sure. There had my mind in various ways undergone thorough-going changes. And there had I become aware of new powers in my soul". Elsewhere, in answering the charge that foreign influences are found in some of his novels, Kvaran readily recognized his indebtedness to them.

4.

After his decade of journalism in Winnipeg Kvaran returned to Iceland, and though he came back only on two occasions thereafter, he remained in the mother country an interpreter of and spokesman for his fellow-Icelanders domiciled in Canada. Kvaran's newspaper career in the homeland was even more varied than in Winnipeg. He was associate editor, with Björn Jónsson, of

Ísafold (1895-1900), of **Sunnanfari** (1900-1901), of **Norðurland** at Akureyri 1901-1904 (where his close political and publishing associates were Páll Brím and Guðm. Hannesson), of **Fjalkonan** (1904-1906), and of **Skírnir** (1908-1909). Moreover he wrote a whole host of such articles as **Frjálst Sambandsland**, in support of the freedom of Iceland. In addition he became an outstanding spokesman for spiritualism, along with Rev. Prof. Haraldur Nielsson, and the editor of the psychic-research publication **Morgunn** (1926-1938). He also was a leader in the prohibition movement in the country. It may perhaps be truthfully said that interest in these last named movements waned in Iceland with the lessening of Einar's physical and mental energy. The lifetime of Einar spans all the great movements in Iceland from the middle of the nineteenth century down to the second world war, and in connection with them all he manfully played his part. In the domain of letters Einar's contributions are abiding and in themselves are worthy of a special study. Fortunately for the present writer his task is not that of assessing Einar's contributions to the life and literature of Iceland, but the much humbler one of chronicling some of his doings during his decade of sojourn in the Icelandic community of Winnipeg.

5.

The main sources for the study of Kvaran's story in Winnipeg are the two Icelandic weeklies with which he was successively associated, first **Heimskringla** and then **Lögberg**. Complete files of both of these, as well as the earlier Icelandic newspapers **Framfari** and **Leifur**, are to be found in the library of the Provincial Legislature of Manitoba. Brief articles pertaining to

Einar's Winnipeg period are found in such periodicals as **Almanak Ó. S. Þorgeirssonar**, **Aldamót** and **Breiðablik** (from the pen of his friend the Rev. F. J. Bergmann) and in **Sunnanfari**. In *Icelandic Authors of Today* (*Islandica*, Vol. VI., 1913), Prof. Hermannsson sketches the biographical data on Einar down to 1913; into this account, perhaps because of its brevity of statement, two errors have crept — (1) Kvaran was not associate editor of **Heimskringla** 1886 — 1888; we know that he was assoc. editor only for thirteen issues beginning Sept. 9, 1886; his name does not appear on the fourteenth issue of the paper, Dec 9, 1886. (2) Kvaran was not the editor of **Lögberg** during the entire period 1888-1895; he was listed as one of the publishers of **Lögberg** in its first issue Jan., 14, 1888 and held his editorial post until Feb., 28, 1895, save for a brief interlude. Jón Ólafson was made editor in charge in 1891, and solely edited three issues of **Lögberg** IV. nos 1. 2., 3. for January 14, 21, and 28, when he was discharged by the new executive of the paper and Kvaran was reinstated as editor.

6.

Einar Kvaran on his way to Winnipeg visited for several months with a Unitarian clergyman, the Norwegian Christopher Janson, in Minneapolis, whose personality and thought made considerable impression on him. Janson's article on **Drengirnir okkar** Kvaran translated and published in Winnipeg. Immediately on reaching his journey's end Einar and his Danish wife (whom he had married in 1885, but who died 20 Nov., 1887) assumed a prominent position in the Icelandic community. In February, 1886, Kvaran and others played several times **Her-**

mannaglettur by the Danish poet Hostrup; Kvaran had provided an Icelandic translation and himself took a part. It was deemed a good entertainment. During the same winter other plays were rehearsed and presented: **Erasmus Montanus**, **Ten Nights in a Bar-room** and **Ævintýri á Gönguför**: Einar played the role of Kranz Kammerað; there were played besides **Jeppe á Fjalli** by Holberg and **Heimspekingarnir**; the performances were well attended. It is likely that Einar also took part in a concert sponsored by the Framfarafélag, Kvenfélag, Söngfélag (Gígjan) and Bindindisfélag in March 1886 in aid of the General Hospital at which the proceeds were \$103.00. On May 1st, 1886 the Söngfélag (Gígjan) held a concert in the house of the Framfarafélag (which was at 137 Jemima Street = Elgin Ave. This place as well as North West Hall and Unity Hall were the three usual places for meetings of Icelanders in Winnipeg). Einar spoke here on the subject of the maintenance of Icelandic nationality in Canada. Shortly after his arrival in the West, Einar had delivered lectures on Icelandic poets since 1850, for which the Fjallkonan in Iceland critized him. In an early issue of Heimskringla Einar stoutly defends himself by publishing extracts from his critiques of the poets Jón Thoroddsen and Kr. Jónsson. These early items in Einar's Winnipeg times are significant; they indicate that Einar is a free-thinker with humanitarian zeal, that he has a flair for dramatics, that he has an interest in local organizations and that he is an independent critic who lets no one, neither in Iceland nor in Winnipeg dominate his judgment.

7.

Kvaran came to Winnipeg to be.

along with Eggert Jóhannsson, assistant editor of Heimskringla, whose publisher and editor was F. B. Anderson. This weekly first appeared Sept., 9, 1886; the location of the press was at 35 and 37 King St. (later the site of the Olafsson Block). Einar left the post after thirteen issues, as has been mentioned above. While there was complete accord between Kvaran and Jóhannsson, there was utter discord between Einar and the editor-in-chief, which was reflected in the writings of both subsequently. **Opið Bréf til Herra F. B. Anderson** (Lögberg, I. 32, Aug., 22, 1888) indicates Einar's estimate of Anderson's short-comings while a private letter from the latter to the present editor of Heimskringla in 1930 shows that the venerable Anderson, then living at Akureyri, Iceland, still cherished animosity towards Einar. Rev. F J. Bergmann and other contemporaries attest to the ability and the services of Anderson but all agree that his temperament was a difficult one to endure. This his own book of recollections, published at Akureyri 1938, amply supports. Heimskringla suspended publication from Dec 9, 1886 no. 14, until April 1887 when the 15th issue appeared, published at 16 James St., West, under a new organization. The vicissitudes of this newspaper do not however here concern us further.

In the first issue of Heimskringla Einar made two distinct contributions. He published his poem entitled **Það er svo margt að** ("There is so much amiss"); in this poem Einar charges his countrymen with many failings, especially their lack of frankness and sincerity. Its concluding lines have often been quoted:

(Continued on page 48)

Grandmother Iceland

By LILIA EYLANDS

We landed on her doorstep on the morning of July 21, 1947. She greeted us with the smile, and embraced us with the warmth of a beautiful sunshiny day. Our eager spirits which had kept us awake most of the night, lest we should land while sleeping, were more than satisfied. We stepped from the plane on Iceland's soil. How often had we not anticipated this moment. Many phrases of flowery descriptions ran through my mind. This then is the land of the "Sagas" and of the oldest parliament in the world; the land of contrasts; the land of glaciers and volcanoes; of snow bound expanses as well as of gushing geysirs and hot springs; the land of the northern lights and of the midnight sun. "Sæl og bless-uð dear grandmother Iceland; land of our forefathers, and dear to us all though we've never beheld you before."

We turned to the people awaiting us at the airport, a host of them. Iceland's hospitality to us had already begun. Representatives from the four congregations were there, and in the terminal building a table was laid for us all where we broke bread together and received an official welcome from our parish. Our arrival there was unique indeed in the fact that we landed in the midst of the parish which Rev. Eylands was to serve. The largest church being in Keflavik about one half mile from the airport. We were taken directly to Reykjavík, thirty miles away where we spent the first week of our sojourn in Iceland. Our eyes and ears were open to every sight and sound. I think we all shared the same first impression which also grew on us the longer we stayed. It was the peculiar mixture of

the very old and the ultra modern. Walking up the narrow sidewalk on Laugarvegur, we met middle aged and elderly women wearing the Icelandic costume — mostly peysuföt, while with them walked perhaps their daughters in street wear of the latest New York fashions. On our right we gazed at quaint shop windows while to the left of us a shiny new Buick or Chrysler car might be speeding by. The same is true of buildings. Particularly in the north country we saw in many places an old **turfbær** (sod house) still in use and across the road perhaps a very modern concrete house with all conveniences. In many places the old **turfbær** stil stands beside the new house. To me, a wayfarer it should be razed, but for sentimental reasons no doubt, it will probably remain standing as long as its former occupants exist.

One stronghold of the past that is in evidence nearly everywhere, is the stone fence built by hand, stone upon stone around the **túns**, gardens or houses. I suppose it was the best method of disposing of the abundant rock.

On one **tún** during haying season one may see the family all working with hand scythes and rakes, while on the next a lone man does it all with the aid of modern implements—tractor, mower and rake. Strangest of all it seemed to hear the Icelandic spoken all around us. Somehow we expected it from the elders, but hearing it from little children was new to us. One of the nicest things ever said to me over there was one short sentence uttered by a very small boy of about five or six. It was at the first service in the Utskálar church. We were filing out

after the service when I noticed a little lad evidently waiting for me. As I approached he doffed his cap with one hand and extended to me the other with this greeting: "Velkomin til landsins". The sweet sincerity of this expression touched me deeply. Bless his little heart, may he grow up to be a good and great man!

Generally speaking, we found the people stoic and reserved. They are not easy to get acquainted with, but once their friendship is gained it will last for life. Their hospitality is such as one has never known. Upon visiting their homes, their very best for you is not good enough, and upon leaving they not only see you to the door but will walk with you to the gate or down the road. If in the country, they invariably take out their own car or jeep and will drive along with you for miles, stopping at some turn in the road to say the final farewell.

The homes are comfortable and well kept. The first thing that draws your attention is not just one oil painting, but usually several, of Icelandic scenery. Then there is the large number of books on the shelves. This is not surprising since the country has many fine artists, and overflows with writers and books. No matter what town or city one comes to, there will be a bookstore on every other corner.

The Icelandic people are a proud race, with an intense love of their country. Their literature and conversation show a deep preoccupation with their land and people. I am reminded of an amusing incident which took place shortly before we returned to America. We were travelling in the north country where Rev. Eylands met many old friends. Having been abroad for a quarter century he was cordially welcomed as the long lost son. During the course of a conversation one old

man asked him; "Are you not lonesome?" "No" replied the minister thinking he meant at present in Iceland.

"O, so you are not lonesome in America?"

The girls in Iceland are pretty and well dressed. I often wondered how they managed these smart and stylish clothes, for not everybody can take a jaunt to New York or Paris to buy them. I knew that there were no dress patterns in all the land; surely, they themselves can't make these clothes! But yes, that is exactly what they do. Many women take a study course in cutting and fitting, then all they need is a tape measure, a magazine picture and material to cut into and snip, snip—no time wasted in pinning on patterns. The women are ingenious, thrifty and industrious in their homemaking. They are also active in many organizations of their own. They work for the church and promote various civic enterprises. One of the largest, most popular and most noteworthy of their social activities is the *Slysavarnarfjelög* (accident preventive Societies). There are branches throughout the land, particularly in the coastal regions where the main interests are directed toward sea faring. Every year the ocean claims its toll of lives and since fishing is the main industry, the wives of the fishermen have banded together to raise money for equipment which may be used to rescue sailors from stranded vessels. Special boats are equipped to meet these emergencies. Rev. Eylands had the honor of dedicating one such in the little village of *Sandgerði* belonging to our parish. The small boat was sailed into the harbour where hundreds of people were gathered to pay their respect to the cause. Flags flew everywhere, for it was a gala event. A program followed,—then the dedication. To us who had not seen it before it was impressive.

To them it was a sacred moment. This boat might ere long help save the life of someone dear to them. The minister made the suggestion that this boat be named **Oddur Gislason**, in honor of the pioneer in this life saving activity. This man later came to Canada and is well remembered by relatives and friends here.

The ocean was only a short distance behind the house at Útskálar. Often it was beautiful and calm; more often it was rough and terrifying, but always it was fascinating even under adverse conditions. On calm sunny days we loved to sit by the kitchen window and watch the big ocean steamers sailing by either on their way in to harbor or plying their way oceanward. By the aid of binoculars we could see their flags and tell from where they came. If it was stormy and rough the waves dashed high against the rock bound coast only to be met by the force of a strong gale which for a moment seemed to curb their ferocity by picking off their tops and sending them back in the form of foaming white spray thrown high in the air. It was an enchanting sight as long as one did not remember the small fishing boats that one had seen pass earlier in the day. Many a night did we awaken to the fury of the winter storms and the lashing of the angry waves with a prayer in our hearts for the men at sea. What comfort to know that there were **Slysavarnarfjelög** and that innumerable lives had been saved through their efforts.

Iceland is fascinating and delight-

ful; full of interest for those who are prepared to be interested and full of beauty when you see it at its best. Having seen the country in all its seasonal garbs I cannot say that I found it always beautiful: On a dark windy midwinter day it is just another dull place—or is it because one is so busy hanging on to ones hat lest it blow away! Lacking in poetic fancy, I could never at any time see beauty in the lava beds strewn over so many sections of the land. Not even the beauty of the midnight sunset could add to their dull drab color nor make their fantastic shapes take any other form than that of destruction and hardships caused by their flow from a distant volcano—over homes and farms which someone had probably spent a lifetime in cultivating. However it is not the wind, the short dark days nor the lava beds which will linger in one's memory after leaving. One can never forget the landscape's infinite variety of shapes; the play of light and ever changing colours on land and sea; the purity of atmosphere which brings nature's beauty closer, the midnight sun spreading its multi colored radiance across the firmament; the peace and freedom; nor the sturdy honest, intelligent kindred people of Iceland. Having been there is an unforgettable experience which has deepened our interest and respect for the small nation with its great traditions.

"*Vertu blessuð, dear grandmother Iceland. Thank you for everything!*"

APPOINTMENT

Steina Johnson (see Icel. Can. Members' Corner, Spring '48) has had another important promotion. She has been appointed to the staff of Super-

visors for the Sobie Silk Shops, and left in the middle of September for Ottawa. In her new capacity she will travel to various Canadian cities to supervise the shops. Congratulations, Steina.

Kristinn Gudnason

Orphaned at six and owning a three million dollar business at sixty! Flying to Iceland annually in the interest of the Gideon Bible Society and business contacts on four continents!

This, in brief, is the life story of Kristinn Gudnason of Oakland, California. He was born in Iceland on May 30, 1883 at Flóa in Arnessýslu. When



Krist. Gudnason in his office

fourteen years old he went to Reykjavík and was hired as a laborer at a salary of forty krónur (about eight dollars) a year. His employer sent him to sea on a fishing vessel and while on the ship he was paid forty krónur a month. When he came back his employer wanted him to hand over the money and continue in his service at the original rate. Kris rejected this suggestion and promptly accepted a job on a Norwegian whaler. Two years later he reached Norway and got employment immediately selling books. He was very successful as a salesman and

soon managed to pay his debts and put a little aside for the future.

In April 1904 Kristinn sailed to America. With only ten cents in his pocket with which to buy bread, he landed his first job and was sent to a section gang on the Union Pacific Railroad near Kansas City. For five years he worked as a common laborer. At no time during those five years was his income more than \$15.00 per week. "I didn't know then", he said, "as I know now, that by the Grace of God I am a salesman".

Coming to Chicago in 1905, Kris got a job with a ladies clothing firm. The following year he met Miss Frances Griffin who, four years later, after he had moved to Portland, Oregon, became his wife. Their wordly goods were most meagre but the young couple accepted as their motto the words, - "Faithful in little things", and decided that they would live within their means. They bought a city lot, paying \$5.00 down and \$5.00 per month. With \$50.00 worth of lumber, they built a floor and raised the walls of their first home, covering it with a canvas roof. Here their two boys, Harold and Earl were born. In spite of the added burden of a family Mr. and Mrs. Gudnason did not break their resolve to live within their means. They attribute their ability to do so to their habit of "tithing". Their "tithing crock" on the shelf was never empty and reminded them of the curse of Elijah's time.

In the course of time, however, Kristinn's responsibilities, as the head of a family, did mount beyond the limits of his income so he applied for a raise. The boss told him very bluntly that he wasn't worth more than \$15.00 a week

and that he had not asked him to marry and was not responsible for the added expense of a family. But in spite of his cold and cruel business manner the employer had some good qualities and gave Kris this advice, "Up to now you have been working from the neck down. Why not try from the neck up? After all there is a head on you." Taking this suggestion seriously, the young man went out on his own as a salesman

largest ready-made ladies dress manufacturing company west of Chicago. They carry innumerable styles of washable cottons, rayons, seersuckers, jerseys dresses and cloaks. This year they came out with a complete and original line of "new-look" women's apparel. The Look magazine devoted one whole page to a display of this company's Ne Look Dresses.

The office and factory were moved



Earl Gudnason, Esther Williams, Hollywood star and model, and Harold Gudnason

and within a few months had raised his income from \$15.00 per week to \$1500 per month!

In the spring of 1920, Kris moved his family to Oakland, California, where he became a salesman for a Los Angeles dress manufacturer. But in 1924 he decided that the only way to make any real headway was to go into the manufacturing business for himself. Borrowing on his residence he launched the Alice Frock Company. (Alice is his daughter's name). From a sales record of \$20,000 in the first year, the business passed the \$2 million mark in 1946. Mr. Gudnason expects that within a few years the turnover will be not less than \$10 million annually.

Today Alice of California is the

from Oakland to San Francisco two years ago. Besides the four-story factory and display rooms with offices, at 75 Fremont Street, they operate in fourteen other centres of the Bay Area. The actual head of the business today is Harold, the oldest son, who is the Vice-President and Business Manager of the firm. Alice, the daughter, is head of the shipping department and Earl, the younger son, is the Factory Manager.

The advertising and display manager is Florence Frederickson, an Icelandic lady, graduate of the University of California at Berkeley, whose parents were born in Winnipeg. There are over six hundred employees on a payroll of over \$1 million per year.

The company has twenty-eight full

time salesmen in forty-eight States. They are on straight commission and earn from twelve to twenty thousand dollars per year. Business connections are maintained in the Hawaian Islands, the Philippines, China, South Africa and the Scandinavian countries.

In October of last year the Manufacturers and Wholesalers Association of San Francisco co-operatively charted two D. C. 4 planes and proceeded to Paris to display California fashions to the Parisians. They took ten specially selected Hollywood girls to model a show of over one hundred styles of dresses, suits, coats and other ladies' apparel. For floral decorations in the display a load of California flowers was flown across. Harold, who is Vice President of the Association and is President of the Pacific Coast Garment Manufacturers Association, was one of the Directors of the expedition. So successful was it that there is to be a return display of French styles this fall in San Francisco.

Kristinn Gudnason is a very religious man. He was converted at the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago in 1905 and has been steadfast in the faith ever since. "I owe the Bible much", he has said, "in it I have found truth and wisdom and I have it to thank for being still able to speak and read Icelandic. When I was in Norway, I bought an Icelandic edition of the Bible and when I came to America I purchased one in English. Since that time I have read both, compared them and in that

way have learned English and kept up my Icelandic".

Mr. Gudnason is an active member of the Gideon Bible Society and the Christian Businessmen's Society of America. Through his efforts a branch of the Gideon's has been established in Iceland. Five hundred copies of the Bible have been ordered for distribution into every room in the hotels in Iceland.

Kris is generous and knows that it is more blessed to give than to receive. Besides his church (Baptist) and the societies to which he belongs he contributes to Foreign and other Missions. Countless individuals have shared in his bounties. He has a smile that never wears off and radiates the joy which is his as one of God's humble servants.

Although the management of the Alice Frock Company has been in the hands of the sons for the last couple of years, Kristinn still takes a keen interest in the business. In order to keep up his art of salesmanship he has reserved for himself a rugged territory in the northern part of California. The writer was privileged to accompany him on one of his selling expeditions and to his great wonder and amazement watched the master salesman in action, selling dresses at the rate of \$2000.00 worth per day. Yes, Kris is a wonder and has done wonders with his God-given talent. "He that is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much".

S. O. Thorlakson

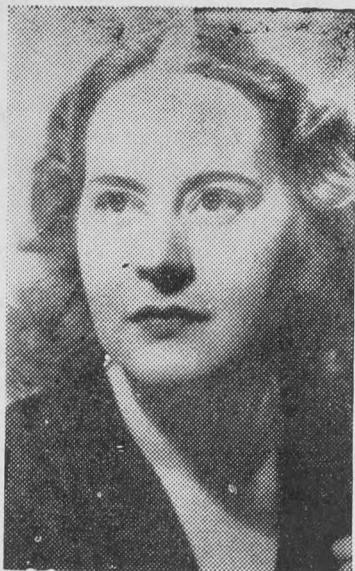
ICELAND'S THOUSAND YEARS

Put in your Christmas order early for this popular book on Iceland.

Price, bound \$2.50, — paper covered

\$1.50. There is a discount of 25% if 3 or more books are ordered. Send orders to: Mrs. H. F. Danielson, 869 Garfield St., Winnipeg, Canada.

Palmason New York Recital



Miss Pearl Palmason, noted Canadian violinist, gave her New York debut recital in Town Hall Sept. 19, to a large and appreciative audience. She is the first person on this continent of Icelandic descent to appear in solo recital in New York's Town Hall. She was ably accompanied by Miss Snjolaug Sigurdson, another Winnipeg musician, and both young artists received unusually laudatory press notices from the N. Y. critics.

Miss Palmason's major offerings for the evening were the Hindemith Sonata in E, the Sibelius Concerto in D minor, and the Chausson "Poème", all extremely formidable and exacting works demanding the utmost in interpretation, dramatic expression, and a profound mastery of the instrument. Following are excerpts from the New York dailies:

"Miss Palmason's playing was always especially satisfying when the music asked warmth of feeling and

permitted her to give free vent to her emotions. . . . In the Chausson "Poème" which favored this approach, she found it possible to provide the sensuous sort of sound asked, conquered the majority of its difficulties adroitly and built up the two big climaxes in acceptable fashion.

"Again in the Sibelius Concerto, it was in the statement of the broad intense "largamente" phrases of the second theme of the initial Allegro, and the G-string measures at the start of the Adagio, that she reached true impressiveness.

"Miss Palmason was fortunate in her accompanist, Miss Snjolaug Sigurdson, who provided unusually sensitive and carefully adjusted support at the piano" by Noel Straus, in the New York Times.

"Miss Palmason, who has already been heard in Canada, England and Iceland, displayed a tone of appealing quality and texture which usually, if not invariably maintained its best standards. Her playing showed technical competence There was more emotional persuasiveness and understanding of the spirit of the "Poème" whose sentiment was revealed but not exaggerated. Miss Snjolaug Sigurdson, the assisting pianist played very creditably." F. D. P. (Herald Tribune)

"Miss Palmason was at her best in sensuous passages of music and often she played with elan and vigorous tone. . . . Her able accompanist was Miss Snjolaug Sigurdson". . . . New York World Telegram.

All these papers offer some criticism as a matter of course. The N. Y. Times says: "Doubtless the mugginess of the

weather (earlier in the review the paper referred to Miss Palmason being handicapped by the extreme heat) accounted for some of the slips from pitch", and goes on to criticize somewhat her treatment of the Hindemith Sonata, which is the more surprising, as Miss Palmason has for years shown special affinity for that particular masterpiece. As long as five years ago she was widely acclaimed by Toronto critics for her "advanced musicianship" when she played the Sonata. When she played at Helicon Hall, Toronto in 1944 Hector Charlesworth in the "Globe and Mail", wrote:

" her recital was comprehensive proof of her brilliant virtuosic gifts. Her personal beauty is no detriment to her artistry.

"One of the notable factors in her playing is her magnificent bowing style, always authoritative and sure; and her left hand technique is so finely developed as to give a perfect balance. Few violinists, even of great fame, are more impressive in attack, and her tone is remarkably full and lovely in quality. Her enthusiasm and poetic musicianship are at all times apparent."

Miss Palmason, born in Winnipeg, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Sveinn Palmason, now resident at Winnipeg

Beach, had already a brilliant musical career behind her. She has been winner of several prizes, among them being: Aikins Memorial Trophy at the Manitoba Musical Festival, three silver medals from the Toronto Conservatory of Music for highest marks in Canada in their music exams and a scholarship with the Toronto Conservatory for three years of study with Elsie Spivak, concert master of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. During that time she gave recitals in Ontario and Winnipeg.

She studied for two years (1938-39) in England with Carl Flesch, one of the world's most renowned teachers. In 1938 she gave concert-hall and radio recitals in Reykjavík, Iceland.

When war broke out she returned to Canada and spent a year in Winnipeg concertizing, then went to Toronto to study with Kathleen Parlow, becoming a member of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, and appearing as soloist with the orchestra. She was also active in chamber music, being the leader of the Conservatory String Quartet. During this time she did solo concerts, and has appeared at the Eaton Auditorium.

Last fall she was granted a year's leave of absence from the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and it has been spent in New York studying with Dr. D. C. Dounis, and culminated in her Town Hall debut recital. **H. D.**

THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN

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A Page From the Past

The Icelandic Canadian is indebted to Mr. J. J. Swanson for the following story.

During a recent holiday trip, Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Swanson, of Winnipeg, visited Mrs. D. S. Curry* in her home at Coronado, California. When they admired an exotic piece of furniture in her living room, Mrs. Curry told them a story that takes us back to that romantic era at the turn of the century when much of America's human element had hardly begun to assimilate into a nation, but clung to the folkways of the homeland; when fabulous San Francisco was a colorful crazy quilt of creeds and customs where anything could happen — and did.

It was a lovely spring day in 1903 Mrs. Curry was sauntering along a San Francisco thoroughfare when a runaway team of horses swept like a cyclone through the street, knocking down all obstacles or scattering them to either side. She rushed out and rescued a small Chinese child who was playing in their path, then continued casual' on her way.

A few days later, when the incident was all but forgotten by Mrs. Curry, a Chinaman in native dress and skull cap, called on her and thanked her for having saved the life of his child. He intended, he said, to give her a present. She tried to persuade him that under the circumstances anyone would have done exactly as she had done, and that he should just forget about it. But only a few weeks passed before a messenger arrived and handed her a small exquisitely carved teakwood table with a top of inlaid design. A few days later the

Chinaman called again and asked if the gift had arrived. When Mrs. Curry replied in the affirmative, he told her that if she ever needed money she "could get some out of the table", then obsequiously bowed himself out of her life. The table was such a lovely thing that Mrs. Curry had no doubt she could sell it for a pretty penny, but she had no desire to do so.

In the years that followed the Currys travelled extensively, spending a number of years in England and on the continent. Wherever they went, there too went the pretty Chinese token, for they prized it highly. Ultimately they moved back to San Francisco and then to San Diego.

It was in the year 1916, during their second move in San Diego, to the home they occupied previously to moving to her present home in Coronado, that the true meaning of the Chinaman's words revealed itself to Mrs. Curry. Keeping an eye on the moving men, she glanced out to see big tufts of cotton blowing about the street. Thinking that they had torn a mattress, she stepped outside the door and found one of the men busy picking up what appeared to be gold coins and dollar bills from the pavement. The Chinese table had been dropped on the concrete step, and the impact had shaken loose a neatly fitted and cleverly concealed panel in the inlaid top, releasing \$300.00 in gold coins and \$700.00 in twenty dollar bills to scatter upon the pavement.

Carefully wrapped and tightly packed in cotton batting the coins had kept their golden silence in the table top through the years.

C. G.

* Ed. note: Mrs. Curry is Sigurbjorg Danielsdóttir, daughter of Daniel (póstur) Sigurðson, from Norðurmúlasýslu, Iceland.

The Oldest Living Thing in the World

By CHRISTIAN SIVERTZ

A short time ago I spent a few weeks in San Francisco, California and visited, among other places, the Natural History Museum located in Golden Gate Park.

Among the many interesting and instructive things I noticed in the Museum was a section or, to put it more precisely, a round, cut out of one of the world famous Sequoia trees, generally known as the California Redwood. Having a few months earlier in Chicago, seen a similar round, — very probably cut from the same tree—I was much impressed, and the thought occurred to me that the readers of The Icelandic Canadian might be equally interested in this great natural wonder, especially as I do not recollect seeing anything written in Icelandic about the Sequoia Trees, except for some fragmentary mention, and that many years ago.

The following account is merely a copy of the printed matter which is displayed for public information besides the exhibit. On enquiry I learned that no duplicates of this information are available, but that I was at liberty to copy by hand anything given in the text. Whereupon I proceeded to copy the whole text, which is as follows:

"This section was cut from a tree in the Sequoia National Park in which there are a thousand similar trees, many of them much larger than this one. These trees are about 30 miles north east of Vasalia, from where they can be easily reached over an excellent road through wonderfully interesting scenery.

The tree from which this section was cut, was 330 feet high; 25 feet in

diameter at the base; 16 feet in diameter 15 feet above base and 11 feet 6 inches in diameter 50 feet from the ground.

There are two species of Sequoias—the Big Tree (*Sequoia gigantia*) and the Redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*). The Big Trees are found only in the Sierras in a narrow strip, about 250 miles long, extending from the latitude of Porterville to that of Lake Tahoe at 5,000 to 7,500 elevation above sea level. The Redwoods occur only in the Coast Ranges, from Monterey County northward to Oregon. In earlier geologic times, species of Sequoias were much more widely distributed than they now are. Fossil remains have been found in numerous places, even in the far north. Living trees are now found nowhere in the world, except in California and the southern part of Oregon. The Sequoias are the oldest living things in the world. The oldest tree whose rings of annual growth have been accurately counted is one that grew in the Converse grove east of Fresno. When that tree was cut down in 1892, it was 3210 years old. At the birth of Christ it was a great tree more than 1300 years old. At the time of the Trojan wars and the exodus of the Hebrews from Egypt it was a sturdy sapling.

The tree from which this section was taken, was 1710 years old when it fell in the winter of 1917-18. It was a good sized sapling in 220 A.D.

In 1492 when Columbus discovered America, it was a magnificent tree 1275 years old, probably 300 feet high and 22 feet in diameter.

For this interesting and instructive

exhibit the Museum is indebted to Hon. Joseph D. Grant, Vice-Pres. of the California Academy of Sciences, and Col. John R. White, Superintendent of the Sequoia National Park, who generously met the expence of its preparation and shipment to the museum".

The Museum also exhibits a list of thirty-two events of great historical significance that have happened during the life of this particular tree. This list I also copied on the spot, but anyone interested in history can look up the dates, starting with the date when

the tree began its growth in 207 A.D. It is intriguing to think that during its life the Goths invaded the Roman Empire (250 A.D.), the Magna Charta was signed (1215), Joan of Arc was burned at the stake (1431), and Carolus Linnaeus, Swedish naturalist, and founder of modern Botany, was born (1758).

Of interest to those of Icelandic descent would be the fact that this great Sequoia tree was 661 years old when Iceland was first colonized, and almost eight hundred years old when Leif Erickson discovered America.

NEW MUSIC

By S. K. Hall

S. K. Hall, Bac. Mus., has prepared a second volume of Song Miniatures, which he would like to publish. But the cost of publishing music is very high and a certain number of advance subscribers to the book will have to come forward before publication can be attempted.

There are doubtless few Icelanders in this country who are unfamiliar with Mr. Hall's Icelandic Song Miniatures' (vol. I.) with its collection of delightful tunes, together with the Icel. and Eng. texts of poetic gems. Many a singer has found joy in performing those songs and many an audience has sat enthralled listening to "The Birch Tree", "Thou Art So Like a Flower", and the six other gems contained in that volume.

"Song Miniatures" Volume II. will contain eight songs with piano accom-

paniments and Icel. and Eng. texts. The songs are as follows: Pótt þú langförull legðir (The pioneer song), Á sprengisandi (On the desert), Hjarta mitt og harpa (My heart and lute), I remember (Altaf man eg), Vögguljóð (Cradle Song, (Jak. Johnson), Farewell, Prayer at Eventide, and Remorse.

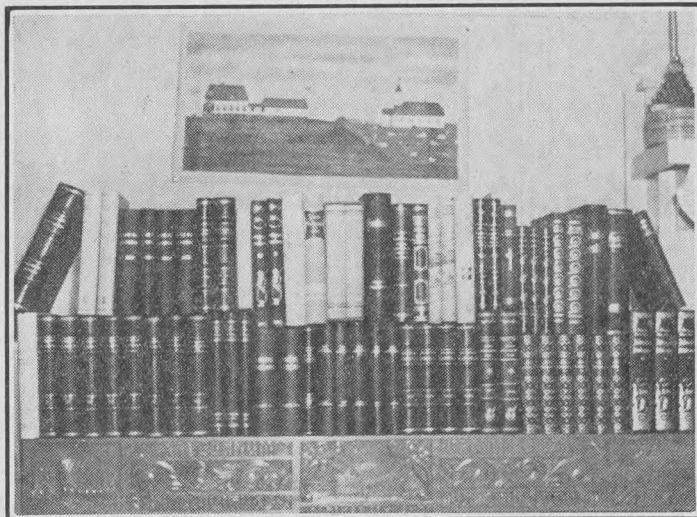
Our host of music lovers and others who because of their generosity and unselfishness like to support the cultural efforts of our small group, will no doubt be glad to send in their advance orders so as to make sure that this volume will reach the publisher. The price of the book will be \$1.75 but no payment is required until the music is delivered.

Send your orders NOW, to The Icelandic Canadian, 869 Garfield St., Winnipeg, Man.

The Eylands Family Comes Home

The reader would no doubt be thrilled to be presented with a large new library; books that he had perhaps thought of yearningly; books that comprise some of the best that has been written in Icelandic literature, ancient and modern; books whose monetary value would come close to a thousand

ers, officials and dignitaries of church and state; in appreciation of Rev. Eylands meritorious work as pastor at Útskálar and the other parishes where he served, and as a token of cherished companionship with the family as a whole during this year of their sojourn in 'the old country'.



Five-foot hand-carved book-shelf and books from Útskálar Parish.
Above is a painting of the church and manse.

dollars,—but whose real worth is beyond price!

This was the happy experience of Rev. V. J. Eylands, pastor of the First Lutheran church, when he left Iceland after serving there for a year as exchange pastor.

The books are beautiful and elegantly finished as to paper, printing and binding. Many of them are special deluxe editions, and all of them will be treasured by Rev. and Mrs. Eylands as mementoes of a year enriched by deep experience and fine friendships. The books came from all over Iceland, from relatives, from friends, co-work-

ers, officials and dignitaries of church and state; in appreciation of Rev. Eylands meritorious work as pastor at Útskálar and the other parishes where he served, and as a token of cherished companionship with the family as a whole during this year of their sojourn in 'the old country'.

Among these books is a new edition of Snorri Sturluson's 'Heimskringla' and the 'Lexicon Poeticum' by the distinguished and accomplished classicist Sveinbjörn Egilson (1791-1852), and a great number of other choice books too numerous to mention.

The main portion of this library is a selection of books from the parish served by Rev. Eylands during the year. At a farewell reception tendered to him and Mrs. Eylands, the congregations of the Útskálar Parish presented the minister with a beautifully hand-carved book-shelf, depicting the Útskálar church in the center, together with the

following inscription: "From the Parish of Útskálar, Hvalsnes, Keflavík, and Njarvík,—(to) Valdemar Eylands."

The shelf contains about fifty volumes of choice Icelandic literature, elaborately bound. Among them are the complete works of Jón Trausti, Gunnar Gunnarsson, and Einar H. Kvaran; the Annals of Espólín, and a de luxe edition of the Passion Hymns of Hallgrímur Pétursson.

Before the Eylands family left Iceland they travelled extensively, and visited, among other places, the old home at Laufás, Húnavatnssýsla, where Mr. Eylands was born, and the homes of Mrs. Eylands' people in Hrútafjörður and Borgarfjarðarsýsla. And always the people greeted them with loving kindness. There were receptions and gaiety and finally, sadness at the leave taking.

And there were gifts, — thoughtfully selected, lovely gifts! For Mrs. Eylands from the parishes an elaborately made and embroidered Icelandic festive costume, made of heavy satin as is the fashion now, and complete with a mole-skin bordered full-length mantle. — From relatives there is a jewel-box whose lid is of intricately hand carved Icelandic birch which is so hard it has the feel of satin smooth old ivory and the glow of a priceless cameo richly carved into a Queen Conch shell. And the box is a treasure chest of jewelry, with filigree in silver and gilt and many other fine pieces.

The children were not forgotten. For them, too, there were gifts. And for the family ensemble there were paintings, large framed prints, statuettes and Icelandic figurines, and models of birds. These are mainly designed and fashioned by Guðmundur Einarsson frá Miðdal, who first began his work in ceramics some 12 years ago. A gift from

Dr. Sigurgeir Sigurdson, the Bishop of Iceland, and his family, is a twenty-inch tall statue of the Icelandic Falcon. In ancient times this famous bird was caught, tamed and exported by Icelanders to be used in the sport of falconry so widely practiced by European kings and princes during the middle ages. The story is told that the king of Denmark issued commands that he alone should have the falcons caught and trained in Iceland, and he used to send a ship solely for the purpose of bringing them to Denmark.

From Grindavík Parish there is a large framed lithograph of their village which is so well known in Iceland as being the home of the famous composer Sigvaldi Kaldalóns, who was also a doctor of medicine.

We can understand that the Eylands family had a great experience in staying for a year in Iceland, which the children and Mrs. Lilia Eylands then saw for the first time, she being born in Upham, N. D. Her parents were Guðbjartur Johnson and his wife Guðrún Ólafsdóttir. Before her marriage in 1925 she was a school teacher and studied music, especially vocal. She is active in the work of the church, is a member of the senior choir and before going to Iceland was president of the Junior Ladies' Aid.

Rev. and Mrs. Eylands have four children: Elene, Jon Valdemar and Lilia Marie who went with them to Iceland; and Dolores, the oldest who stayed behind to finish her course at the University of Manitoba.

Rev. Eylands, son of Jón Danielson and his wife Sigurlaug Þorsteinsdóttir, came to America in 1922 after attending the State College of Iceland for 5 years.

"I never was a fisherman in Iceland," he says, "but in order to make money

for further education I worked at various jobs in this country, such as carpentry and for one year as a fisherman on Lake Winnipeg."

He studied at Concordia College and received his B.A. from the Lutheran Seminary, St. Paul. After being ordained he served as pastor in North Dakota, and for 7 years at Bellingham, Wash. In 1938 he became pastor of the First Lutheran church, Winnipeg. In 1942 United College conferred on him the degree of Bachelor of Divinity in recognition for his book, 'Lutherans in Canada', which was then in manuscript form but was published in 1945.

Rev. Eylands has been very active in cultural activities for the Icelandic community here, serving on numerous

councils and committees. For a number of years he has been on the executive of the Icelandic National League and was president from 1946-48. For his work in the field of Icelandic culture, the honor of becoming a Knight of the Order of the Falcon was conferred on him June 17th, shortly before he left Iceland.

Since coming back home both Mr. and Mrs. Eylands have been busy giving addresses on Iceland for various clubs, and on Sunday Oct. 3, the congregation of the First Lutheran church held, in the church parlors, a reception in their honor where an overflow crowd of friends and parishioners had a chance to say to them a hearty 'Welcome Home!'. H. D.

At the End of Ninety Years

This summer Walter Nordal, well known pioneer of Selkirk, Manitoba, celebrated his 90th birthday.

Mr. Nordal came from Iceland in 1887, tarried only a few days in Winnipeg and then went on to Icelandic River. After eight months he moved to Selkirk and established a rest house for transients hauling fish from Icelandic River to Winnipeg. At this stopping place, on the corner of Main St. and McLean Ave., as many as fifty persons were often accommodated, and the barn was built for 25 teams of horses.

He is the only surviving member of the original board of trustees of the Selkirk Lutheran Church, founded in May 1889. Married to Sigurbjorg Bjornsdottir in Iceland in 1882, the couple brought two children with them from Iceland, Steinunn, now at Selkirk, and Bjorn, who died at the age of 25. Four more children were

born to them in Canada, August and Jonas of Winnipeg, Mrs. Valdine Condie of New York, and Mrs. Gudrun Helgason of Toronto. Miss Valdine Condie, who won renown as a child pianist, is a granddaughter (Icelandic Canadian, June, 1945, p.18). The family branch has now expanded to 26 grandchildren and 32 great grand children. After the death of his first wife, Mr. Nordal married Guðfriður Gudmundsdottir in 1923. She died in 1936, and he was re-married in 1942 to Elin Kjartansdottir.

Besides keeping a stopping place, Mr. Nordal built the first store on the south side of Manitoba Avenue, on Main Street, Selkirk, in 1905. This was operated as a restaurant for 13 years, until he sold it in 1918.

He still plays the accordion, reads and is in splendid health.

OUR WAR EFFORT



Pte. Ernest Jensen



Flt.-Lieut. L. T. Jensen

PTE. ERNEST JENSEN—Born at Elfros, Sask., Dec. 4, 1917. Joined the R.C.A.S.C. Jan. 8, 1942. Served in Canada, Belgium, England, France, Holland and Germany. Awarded the 1939-1945 Star, France and Germany Star, Defence Medal, Can. Volunteer Service Medal and Clasp.

FLT.-LIEUT. LAWRENCE THOMAS JENSEN—Born at Elfros, Sask., Oct. 10, 1916. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. at Winnipeg, Man., June 11, 1940. Trained at Brandon, Man., Jericho Beach, Vancouver, B. C., Ottawa, Dunville, Hagersville, Mountain View, Ont. Received commission Oct. 1942. Instructed at Paulson, Man. Posted overseas, going through operational training, conversion unit and 434 Bluenose Sqd. Bomber Command. Completed tour of operations. Awarded 1939-1945 Star and operational wings.

Sons of Mrs. Lottie Jensen, Elfros, Sask.

In Memoriam



RFMN. SIGFUS LAWRENCE THORARINSON

Born at Winnipeg, Man., Nov. 3, 1902. Enlisted in Canadian Army 1942. Trained at Camp Shilo, Man. Embarked overseas March 1943. Served in England, Belgium, France and Germany. He was killed in action March 30, 1945. Son of the late Gudmundur and Lillian (Helgason) Thorarinson, Winnipeg, Man. (formerly of Gimli, Man.).



Rfmn. S. L. Thorarinson



Ens. Paul H. Gislason Lt. (j.g.) Anna E. Hinderlie Capt. G. John Gislason

ENS. PAUL H. GISLASON—Born at Grand Forks, N.D., Apr. 7, 1925. Enlisted in the U.S. Navy May 23, 1943. Served in the Pacific and Philippine theatre of war on the L.S.T. with the 3rd and 5th fleets.

Lt. (j.g.) ANNA E. (Gislason) HINDERLIE (N.C.) U.S.N.R.—Born at Grand Forks, N.D., Nov. 5, 1919. Joined the U.S. Navy June 8, 1943. Served in naval hospitals at Oakland, Calif., Seattle, Wash. Was at Base Hospital No. 18 at Guam, M.I., from Dec. 1944 to Jan. 1946. Discharged March 10, 1946.

CAPT. G. JOHN GISLASON—Born at Grand Forks, N.D., Sept. 18, 1918. Enlisted in U.S. Army July 5, 1944. Served in the European theatre of war. Was battalion surgeon with the 410th. Inf. in Germany, France and Austria. He received the Bronze Star Medal, Combat Medical Badge. Discharged May 30, 1946.

Sons and daughter of Mrs. Esther M. Gislason and the late
Dr. Gudmund J. Gislason, Grand Forks, N.D.

In Memoriam



CPL. WILLIAM J. A. McLEOD

Born at Lundar, Man., Dec. 9, 1920. Was with the Scottish Regiment C. Company, 3rd. battalion. Was killed in action Aug. 15, 1944. Son of Mrs. Munda (Davidson) Pascoe and the late Frederick McLeod, Lundar, Man.



Cpl. William J. A. McLeod



L.-Cpl. M. A. Eyolfson



Flt.-Lieut. K. M. Eyolfson

L.-CPL. MAGNUS ANDRES EYOLFSON—Born Apr. 17, 1916 at Leslie, Sask. Joined the Provost Corps of the Canadian Army Nov. 10, 1942. Served in France, Belgium, Holland and Germany. He was awarded the C.V.S.M., 1939-1945 Star, and France and Germany Star. Discharged March 5, 1946.

Flt.-Lieut. KRISTJAN MARTEINN EYOLFSON, D.F.C. & Bar—Born at Leslie, Sask., May 18, 1917. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. Feb. 13, 1941. Was awarded Navigators Badge, D.F.C., 1939-'45 Star, Aircrew Europe Star, Wireless Air Gunners Badge, France & Germany Star, R.C.A.F. Operational Wing & Bar, Defence Medal, C.V.S.M. & M.L

Sons of Mr. & Mrs. Helgi Eyolfson, Leslie, Sask.



CPL. STEFAN BYRON—Born at Vestfold, Man., Feb. 24, 1921. Enlisted in the R.C.O.C. June 1942. Trained in Esquimalt, B.C. Embarked for overseas May, 1943. Transferred to R.C.E.M.E. Served in France, Belgium, Holland and Germany. Discharged March, 1946. Son of Kari and Anna Byron, Lundar, Man.



C.P.O. STEFAN HELGASON—Born at ísafjörð, Icel., July 18, 1904. Enlisted Can. Navy Oct. 1939. Presented with British Empire Medal. Now at Shaughnessy Hosp., Vancouver, B.C. Son of the late Helgi Jóhannes Sigurgeirson and Cecelia Kristjánsdóttir, Ísafirði, Icel. Nephew of Christian Sivertz, Vancouver.



Pte. O. J. Anderson Pte. Andrew C. Anderson Tpr. W. W. Anderson

PTE. OLIVER JOSEPH ANDERSON—Born at North Vancouver, Aug. 6, 1927. Enlisted 1944. Served in Italy, Germany. Was awarded the Canadian Service Medal and Clasp. Discharged August 1946.

PTE. ANDREW C. ANDERSON—Born at Brandon, Man., Jan. 11, 1917. Enlisted in N.R. M.A.C.D. May 1942. Served in Canada. Discharged Nov. 1943.

TPR. W. W. ANDERSON—Born at Churchbridge, Sask., Feb. 15, 1919. Enlisted in the Canadian Motorcycle Regiment 1939. Served in United Kingdom and Central Mediterranean area. Was awarded 1939-1945 Star, Italy Star, Defence Medal, Volunteer Canadian Service Medal and Clasp.

Sons of Mrs. Ingibjörg and the late Dagbjart Anderson, North Vancouver, B. C.



F.O. Jon Willmar Hjörleifson

F.O. JON WILLMAR HJÖRLEIFSON—Born at Lögberg, Sask., Aug. 13, 1916. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. April 1942. Trained at Saskatoon, Sask., and other parts of Canada. Discharged 1945.

PETUR C. HJÖRLEIFSON—Born at Lögberg, Sask., March 18, 1919. Enlisted in the Canadian Army 1942. Trained in Vernon, B. C., and other parts of Canada. Served in Italy and Germany. Discharged 1945.

Sons of P. C. and Ragnheiður Hjörleifson, Vancouver, B. C.



Petur C. Hjörleifson



Gnr. Sveinn Erickson



Tpr. Mathias Erickson

GNR. SVEINN ERICKSON—Born at Lundar, Man., Dec. 14, 1909. Enlisted in R.C.A. 1942. Trained at Esquimalt, B.C. Transferred to 17th (NBCO) coast regiment R.C.A.C.A. Prince Rupert, B.C. Was with the Edmonton Regiment 13, C.A.B.T.C. at Camrose, Alta., and Dundurn, Sask. Awarded C.V.S.M. ribbon. Disch. 1946.

TPR. MATHIAS ERICKSON—Born at Lundar, Man., Dec. 19, 1915. Enlisted Jan. 1943. Trained at Camp Borden, Ont. Embarked overseas Aug. 1943. Joined the Royal Canadian Dragoons in England Oct. 1943. Served in Sicily, Italy, Holland and Germany. Returned home Jan. 1946. Discharged March 1946.

Sons of Valdimar and Gudrun Erickson, Lundar, Man.



Pte. Peter Peterson



A.B. Ralph Peterson

PTE. PETER PETERSON—Born in Winnipeg, Man., June 30, 1907. Enlisted in the R.C.A.S.C. June 11, 1941. Served in the United Kingdom and Continental Europe. Discharged June 30, 1946.

A.B. RALPH PETERSON—Born at Langruth, July 31, 1924. Enlisted in R.C.N.V.R. Aug. 2, 1943. Served in Canada, United Kingdom and Newfoundland. Discharged Jan. 4, 1946.

Sons of Mr. & Mrs. Wm. Peterson, Langruth, Man.

Two other sons, Jónas and William, also joined the service.



Lieut.-Cmdr. B. G. Sivertz



Major Gustav Sivertz



Cpl. E. M. Sivertz Palmer



Act. Lieut.-Cmdr. S. Sivertz

LIEUT.-CMDR. BENT GESTUR SIVERTZ—Born at Victoria, B.C., Aug. 11, 1905. Enlisted in Canadian Navy Dec. 15, 1939. Discharged June 29, 1946.

MAJOR GUSTAV SIVERTZ—Born at Victoria, B.C., July 29, 1895. Enlisted in Canadian Army July 7, 1941 as 2nd Lieut. Was promoted to Major and appointed public relations officer, Pacific command. Discharged Dec. 20, 1945. Also served in World War 1. Wounded at Vimy Ridge, Apr. 9, 1917. Discharged May 22, 1919.

ACT. LIEUT.-CMDR. SAMUEL SIVERTZ—Born at Victoria, B.C., July 16, 1907. Enlisted in Canadian Navy Sept. 15, 1940. Discharged May 2, 1946.

Sons of Christian and the late Elinborg Samuelsdóttir Sivertz.
Vancouver, B.C., formerly of Victoria, B.C.

CPL. ELINOR MARY SIVERTZ PALMER—Born at Victoria, B.C., May 25, 1924. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. (W.D.), May 6, 1943.

Daughter of Gustav and Marjorie Dunn Sivertz, Vancouver, B.C.

Members' Corner

By HOLMFRIDUR DANIELSON

It is time for another chatty column on our members, as much has happened to many of them since the last one appeared.

In these informal notes no attempt is being made to give the life history, or a complete survey of the achievements of those featured. These items merely serve to introduce them briefly to our readers.



There are some people who dabble in this or that public project mainly for the sake of the personal publicity they can get out of it. But at the opposite pole are those who would never offer their services to any cause, no matter how worthy for fear that it might be misconstrued as a means to getting into the limelight.

In the person of **Prof. Skuli Johnson** we find a man who has a fine sense of balance when it comes to giving voluntary public service. Naturally his own work, dealing as it does almost exclusively with classical literature, keeps him to a large extent out of the orbit of the general public. And he is content to stay in the background devoting his time to the work that he loves. But if his attention is drawn to some specially worth while voluntary effort he is just as likely to come forward and generously offer his help!

It was, therefore, gratifying indeed, when Prof. Johnson singled out the work of the Icelandic Canadian Evening School as worthy of his support and offered to edit the first year's series of lectures which later were published as "Iceland's Thousand Years", (1945). His keen mind had been quick to foresee the ultimate value of this timely

effort to preserve in this country, our Icelandic heritage. Reports from leaders in the field of education and literature, who have read the book, testify amply to the professor's good judgement in this matter.

Prof. Skuli Johnson was born Sept.



6th, 1888, in Húnavatnssýsla, Iceland. His parents were Sveinn Johnson and his wife Kristín (Sigurðardóttir) who pioneered in Saskatchewan. He is an honor graduate (B.A.) from the University of Manitoba and went to Oxford in 1909 as a Rhodes scholar from Manitoba. He received his M.A. (honors) in 1917. Lecturing in Latin and Greek at Wesley (now United College) 1915-1927, becoming Dean of the Faculty of Arts. Prof. of Classics at U. of Manitoba from 1927 on, and was made Head of the Dept. of Classics in 1940.

During his college career he was active in various types of sport, and

played lacrosse on the Oxford team against Cambridge. Now, with increasingly heavy scholastic duties he limits himself to the occasional game of golf.

In 1921 he was married to Evelyn Truesdale. They have two sons, Harold, taking his M.Sc. in Geology at the U. of M., and Richard in high school. Their home is at 176 Lenore St.

Prof. Johnson is interested in translating Latin and Greek poetry, and also in translating Icelandic poetry, ancient and modern, into English verse. Some of his translations have appeared in the **Icelandic Canadian**. He has written innumerable articles for academic and literary journals, including, *The University Magazine*, *Classical Journal*, *American Journal of Philology*, *Manitoba Arts Review*, *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, *The Icelandic Canadian*, and *The American Scandinavian Review*.

He has served on the executive of The Manitoba Educational Ass'n., and is at present on the executive of the Humanities Research Council of Canada. He is a member of the Council of The Classical Association of Canada whose annual convention he attended this summer at the U. of B. C., being the main speaker there.

By the King and Parliament of Iceland Prof. Johnson was in 1939 made a Knight of the Royal Order of the Falcon.



On June 27 **Miss Mattie Halldorson** celebrated her 25th. anniversary with The T. Eaton Co., and is now a member of their quarter-century club.

During most of this time she has served in the Mail Order Dept., and her associates there celebrated the anniversary fittingly with a dinner in her honor, where she was presented with a diamond dinner ring from the comp-

any. To commemorate the occasion she will also receive a two-months' vacation; which she will take next year, probably she will travel to far lands and find adventure!

This is definitely Mattie's lucky year! No sooner was the celebration at Eaton's over than she was chosen to be



the traditional "Maid of the Mountains" at the Icel. celebration at Gimli, Aug. 2,. There she reigned for a day and in the person of "Fjallkona" symbolic figure denoting Iceland, delivered her greetings and good-will message to her children in Canada. Later she laid a wreath on the Cairn of the Pioneers which stands near Gimli Park.

Mattie was born at Lundar, Man., her parents being the late Johann K. Halldorson and his wife Kristín (Jónsdóttir). From the first Mattie has been

an active member of the Icelandic Canadian Club, almost continuously holding some office, usually that of secretary or treasurer. She is now giving her second year of efficient service as editor of the War Effort column of the Magazine. She is also a valuable member of the First Luth. senior choir, possessing a rich contralto voice. For the last 3 years she has been the president of the choir.



A very vivid personality brightens the quaint cottage at 1875 Drummond Drive, Vancouver, for it may be truly said of **Mrs. Lillian Sumarlidason** that she has that vital quality that the French call "joie de vivre".

"Oh, yes, I'm learning the names of all the varieties of apples, — and all the weeds", laughs Mrs. S. as she shows us around the 2-acre "farm", which they had just bought a year previous, at West Point Grey. Mr. S. was away on business at the time of our visit, and Lillian was busier than a whole hive of bees looking after the gorgeous flowers which bloom in profusion and infinite variety on their lovely plot of land. There are also small fruits, a large vegetable garden, a grape arbor, cherry, plum and apple trees, and a whole room full of Love Birds. But she took time off to entertain royally a houseful of guests and treat us to an afternoon of good comradeship. And at our reluctant departure we were loaded with roses, sweet peas, carnations and fox glove, whose spikes were all of 30 inches tall!

Lillian, who was born in Alberta, was a school teacher and music teacher before her marriage. Her parents, who farmed near Red Deer, are Thorarinn Gudmundson and his wife, Hallfriður Minerva, who died some years ago. After Lillian's marriage to Henry Sum-

arlidason, they carried on large scale farming near Elfros, Sask. Moving to Vancouver they bought an apartment block, and then a year ago they moved out to the little orchard on West Point Grey.

Strictly speaking Mrs. Sumarlidason is not a member of the Icel. Can. Club, — she would be if she lived in Winnipeg, — but she has been for some time a valuable assistant to the Magazine staff, and has sent in several interesting articles. She is very active in cultural work in Vancouver, especially among the Icel. group, being a member of the Lutheran choir, and if occasion demands she serves as organist.

She is very fond of music, and when Kelly's Music store announced last winter that in co-operation with the Hammond Electric Organ Co., they were giving free, a series of 12 lessons on the organ to a selected few, she bravely marched into the store and said she wished to apply. With her bright humor she tells us how the clerk looked at her, — just looked — as much as to say, "What, you?" Mrs. S. is not at all slow on the up-take, and she recounts gaily, "Drawing my middle-aged dignity carefully around me I asked hastily, "Perhaps this is just for young people?" The nice man came to, and answered politely and genially, "Oh, no indeed, madam, anyone can apply". Maybe his glance implied, — "You can apply, but just see if you get accepted".

Well, it turned out that 350 applications came in, and Lillian was among the fortunate 20 who were accepted for the free course. In due time she finished her course of 12 lessons on the Hammond Electric Organ, which was given by Agnes Forsythe, formerly of Winnipeg. At the close of the series she took part in a three-hour recital, attend-

ed by over 700 people. "I played my little piece like all the other students" she says with a twinkle in her eye, "it was a Chopin Waltz, but", and she becomes a bit wistful, "on the electric organ it does not sound exactly like Chopin to me."



While in Vancouver this summer we were teasing **Sig Sigmundson** about what we termed "the antiquated transportation system of the city", "Why on Oak St. you have a street car with seats facing forward and backwards, and

retorted, quick as a flash, "Well, naturally that is just for the convenience of visitors like yourselves who like to view the scenery from all angles. Just imagine what a comfort it is when you have missed some lovely spot, — along Oak St., — all you have to do is rush to a seat in the back of the car and there, slick as anything, you are facing in the opposite direction, and can view the scene in retrospect, as it were!"

But, in all seriousness, Sig and the other officials of BCER are doing an heroic job coping with a situation that would have utterly stumped lesser mortals. Servicing a city that has suddenly spread out in all directions and counts some 452,000 citizens in greater Vancouver, is no sinecure. And the BCER is really going after the problem.

In 1942, when Vancouver was beginning to burst at the seams owing to the influx of workers in coastal War Industry, the Dept. of Mines and Supply (Dom. Govt.) needed a good man to tackle the job of Regional Director of Transit Control. And they got him in the person of Sigurdur Sigmundson, who then gave up his position as Transportation Ass't with the Winnipeg Electric Co., and went West on loan to the government.

In April 1945 he joined the BCER as Transportation Ass't and the next year was promoted to Operations Manager, Transportation Division, BCER Co. Mainland. And now this popular official has stepped up again.

Last July the BCER announced major executive staff changes aimed at keeping pace with the company's conversion and expansion program in mass transit. At that time Ivor W. Neil became general manager of all transit operations of BCER and subsidiaries on the Mainland, while S. Sigmundson became Operations Manager for all



that is really backward in this day and age".

Sig was still just as jolly and good humored as when he lived next door to us on Garfield St. He did not launch aggressively into a detailed account of the modern equipment and improvement being pushed vigorously by the British Columbia Electric Railway Co., nor point with pride at the shiny new buses and street cars which are rolling in increasing numbers along the streets of Vancouver. He merely grinned and

Lower Mainland transportation under the direction of Mr. Neil. This included the BCER and the B. C. Motor Transportation, Ltd., the latter operating Interurban motor buses throughout the B. C. lower mainland, and also to Seattle.

Sig was born in Reykjavík, Iceland, and came to Canada when 4 years old, with his parents, Johann Sigmundson and his wife Thordis (Sigurðardóttir). Went to Daniel McIntyre Collegiate, where he won the Governor-General's Medal in 1925. Received his B.A. degree (Honors) from the U. of M. in 1930 and the same year joined the Winnipeg Electric Co., on a scholarship appointment.

In 1935 he was married to Anna Rosa, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Olafur Petursson, Winnipeg. They have three children, Olafur Johann, Elin, and Petur Karl.

During his school and University years, Sig was very active in sports, playing on championship baseball, soccer, lacrosse and hockey teams.

While in Winnipeg he took part in many community activities, and has held office in the Canadian Club, Junior Board of Trade, Icelandic Canadian Club, Falcon Athletic Ass'n, and "Frón".



Mr. Halldor J. Stefanson was at the annual meeting elected to the editorial staff of the magazine. He was born in Iceland and came to Canada with his father, Jón Stefanson, his mother Guðfinna (Halldórsdóttir), having died when he was a small child. He received his B. A. degree from Wesley College in 1923 and has been high school principal in various towns in Manitoba, his special subjects being History and English. In 1946 he moved from Roblin where he had been principal for 5 years, to Winnipeg, and took a position with the Great West Life Assurance Co., and is now a member of the Presidents' Club of that firm.

The Icel. Can. Club welcomes Mr. Stefanson as a new member and the magazine welcomes him to the staff.

Dr. Backman Appointed

Dr. K. J. Backman has been appointed provincial director of venereal disease control, succeeding Dr. E. M. Gee. Until 1947, Dr. Backman was part-time director of this work. At that time, when the legislature decided to appoint a full-time director, Dr. Backman had declined the appointment and Dr. Gee was appointed.

Dr. Backman, son of Daniel and Hólmfriður Backman, was born in Winnipeg in 1889, but brought up

near Lundar, Man. He graduated in Medicine from the University of Manitoba in 1919 and later took two years of post-graduate work at Chicago.

During his college years he was active in sport, being a championship runner and football player. In 1915 he was married to Sigurlina, daughter of Olafur and Sigþrúður Johnson of Langruth, Man. They have two children, Thruda, Mrs. V. J. Thordarson, Los Angeles, and Kristjan, at home.

Við hafið

Eftir STEINGRÍM ÞORSTEINSSON

*Við hafið eg sat fram á sævar-bergs stall
og sá út í drungann,
þar brimaldan stríða við ströndina svall
og stundi svo þungan.*

*Og dimmur var ægir og dökk undir él
var dynhamra-borgin,
og þá datt á náttmyrkrið þögult sem hel
og þungt eins og sorgin.*

*“Pú haf! sem ber tímans og hamranna farg,
þú hugraun mér vekur,
í hjarta mér innst, þá þú brýzt um við bjarg,
það bergmála tekur.*

*Pinn niður er hryggur, þinn hljómur er sár,
þú hrellir svo muna,
sem brimdropi hver væri beiskasta tár,
hvert báruhljóð stuna.*

*Af aðsigi téra fá augu míni kvöl,
með ekkanum stranga,
hér vildi eg gráta sem barn allt mitt böл
við brimniðinn langa.”*

*En dimmraddað hafið þá knúðist að klett,
það klökk ei né stundi;
í hríðfelldum boðum, sem þeystust að pétt,
það þrumaði og drundi:*

*“Pú, maður hinn veiki, það magn sem eg hlaut,
ei mæðist af kvíða:
hvað stoðar að tárast? í þungrí ber þraut
að þola og stríða.”*

By The Sea

Translated by RUNÓLFUR FJELSTED

*I sat on a cliff where seas ever rave
And gazed through the gloaming.
And heavily sighing the billowing wave
Was falling and foaming.*

*The gloom of the mist and the moan of their breath
The sea cliff did borrow;
And then fell the darkness as silent as death
And heavy as sorrow.*

*"O sea, where the sad waves unquietly start,
And dark storms assemble,
Thou strikest the innermost rocks of my heart,
That echoing tremble.*

*Thy voice is so grievous and piercing to hear,
My spirit doth sicken,
As were every brine drop the bitterest tear
Of seas sorrow stricken.*

*My eyes burn with tears and my grief cannot stay
Its panting emotion;
I would like a child weep my sorrows away,
Where wails the sad ocean."*

*Then high on the cliff dashed the hollow-voiced sea,
Not sobbing or sighing:
With swift whirling waves dashing on wild and free,
It thundered forth crying:*

*"I have, O frail mortal, a power to stay
Unmarred by disaster:
What profit thy tears? learn, when woes come thy way,
To bear them and master."*

—From "Minneota Mascot".

"Fanney" and "Lukka" for Iceland

On August 12th, 1945 there was a mass celebration among the American Icelanders of Tacoma and district, and Tacoma residents in general.

The occasion was the launching at Pt. Defiance of an 85 foot purse seiner which had been built for the Iceland Government by a Tacoma boat building company. The celebration was staged by the Young Men's Business Club, the War Finance committee and the Icelandic societies, in conjunction with the Seventh War Loan drive.

The boat, named Fanney, which combines two Icelandic words meaning Snow Island, was christened by Mrs. K. S. Thordarson wife of Iceland's vice consul in Seattle. Mr. Thordarson was among the thousands present who were thrilled as an Icelandic merchant flag made by Mrs. E. S. Gudmundson was presented to Capt. Ingvar Einarson of the Fanney. Mrs. A. M. Stevens sang the national anthem of Iceland as the flag was flown to the breeze alongside the Stars and Stripes, by Mrs. Sveinsina Berg.

Tacoma, one of the few cities in America, equipped to turn out such a craft cheered as the Fanney, flying its full colors, proudly ploughed into the waters off Pt. Defiance. It has a capacity of 160 tons of fish and can travel 200 hours on its own load of diesel oil.

The Fanney introduced Pacific purse seining methods to the fishermen of Iceland, but on its first voyage it also

carried to Iceland a very typical and precious cargo, a gift of Icelandic books from an American Icelander to his native land.

The books had belonged to the late Eyjolfur S. Gudmundson who died at Tacoma in 1938. Being a book lover he had amassed several thousand Icelandic books and had them all handsomely bound. It was his wish that after his death, this valuable library should be presented to some school in Iceland. Accordingly his widow, Mrs. Lukka, ("Lukka" means "good luck") Gudmundson personally packed the books into 23 large boxes and entrusted them to the skipper of the Fanney.

The books duly arrived in Iceland and were ceremoniously presented to the high school at Stykkishólmí, in the district from whence Mr. Gudmundson came.

In recognition of this fine gift the government of Iceland has now presented Mrs. Gudmundson with the Order of the Falcon, which was delivered to her by Iceland's vice consul, Mr. K. S. Thordarson, at her home in Tacoma.

Lukka Gudmundson was born in Pembina County, N. D., her parents being Gisli Eyjolfsson and his wife, Thorunn Einarsdóttir. She came to the West Coast in 1926, and was married that year to Eyjolfur, and has resided in Tacoma since then.

H. D.

Two sons of **Sveinbjorn** and **Sigridur Peterson**, Pine River, Man., have distinguished themselves in school this year. **Eggert**, 15, won the Isbister schol-

arship (\$150), and **David**, 13, won the highest standing in grade IX for all Manitoba, exclusive of the City of Winnipeg.

Book Review

ICELAND: New World Outpost. By Agnes Rothery. The Viking Press, New York. Macmillan Co. Canada. (214 pp., 25 plates, 3.75.)

Agnes Rothery, author of 29 books including biography, novels, juveniles, and especially travel books, has travelled widely and written about many lands. Particularly fine is her series on the Scandinavian countries, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland and now Iceland.

She spent several weeks in Iceland during the summer of 1947, and seems to have taken a firm hold on her subject. Her keen perception and fine sense of proportion combined with her sympathetic treatment and lively style make the book excellent reading. Moreover, a vast amount of information is packed into its pages, on a large variety of subjects, from ancient history to modern co-operatives; from cooking to the highly subsidized arts of Iceland; from the fundamental essentials 'grass and fish' to the people who live also on their deep-seated appreciation of the beauties and natural wonders of the land, and the work of their poets and painters.

In her chapter on "Books and Bookstores" Miss Rothery says: "It is worth mentioning that in a country where import duty brings in such a needed proportion of government revenue, books in foreign languages are admitted free of duty". She also tells us that "More than three hundred titles are published annually for every hundred thousand Icelanders, which is quite different from the ten titles published annually for each hundred thousand Americans, in the United States."

She will no doubt help to open the

eyes of many Icelanders who have expressed their regret that Halldór Laxness' book *Independent People*, was translated. This powerful epic which portrays a grim and often brutal Iceland and describes social conditions no longer prevalent, might give an indiscriminating reader erroneous impressions of the country. But, says Agnes Rothery, "For Americans to judge Iceland from *Independent People* is as if Icelanders judged the United States from the *Grapes of Wrath* or *Tobacco Road*.

About the descendants of the Icelanders in Canada and the United States she says: "Some are farmers; many are doctors, lawyers and teachers. A fair proportion are in political life. Comparatively few are in business. They are, as a whole, people of superior mental and physical attainments."

The book points up sharply the fact that Iceland furnishes the finest laboratory on earth for testing the benefits which may accrue to mankind if we can ever abstain from pouring our income into machines of mass murder, as for example this passage: "The State buys pictures and commissions statues and sometimes, if we wonder where it gets all its money, we can recall that there is no army or navy to support, so that instead of purchasing battleships and guns it can purchase works of art, subsidize theatres, and educate children to appreciate these things".

The book concludes with this sentence: "Iceland discovered America in the year 1000. It has taken America almost a thousand years more to discover Iceland".

H. D.

GRADUATES



Suzanne Armstrong

Donna Shirley Armstrong

Ellen Frances Hannesson

Donna Shirley Armstrong graduated as Bachelor of Science from the University of Manitoba this spring. **Suzanne Armstrong** was on the honour roll at the time of her graduation from the Winnipeg General Hospital this spring. They are daughters of Roy Armstrong, Winnipeg, and his wife Pauline (Sigvaldson).

★

Miss Laura Edwards graduated from the Calgary General Hospital School of Nursing, she was the winner of the Dr. H. A. Gibson prize as the graduate who by vote of her classmates was the most influential in preserving the ideals and ethics of her class during her 3 years of training. Miss Edwards was also valedictorian. She was presented with a gift by the Rev. Dr. Frank S. Morley of Grace Presbyterian church on behalf of the congregation.

Miss Edwards was the president of the graduating class. She is a daughter of Mr. & Mrs. G. Edwards, Calgary, and grand daughter of Mrs. Hinrik John-

son and the late Hinrik Johnson of Winnipeg.



Frederick T. Fridgeirson, graduated in June from Santa Monica City College with the degree of Associate in Arts. Frederick served in the U.S. Navy during the war. He was born in Iceland, came to this country as a young lad with his parents, and was brought

up in Arborg, Man., where he received his elementary education. He is the son of Mrs. Thorbjorg Fridgeirson of Gimli, and the late Asgeir Fridgeirson.

★

Ellen Frances Hannesson, graduated from the University of Manitoba in June 1948 in Home Economics. Ellen is the daughter of Mr. & Mrs. John Hannesson of Langruth, Man.

Miss Marjory Simundson graduated from the Virginia Mason Hospital School of Nursing in Seattle, Wash., last May. She won the Grace Harter Nelson scholarship award, and at the end of her training took the position of teacher at the above mentioned school of nursing. She is the daughter of Rev. Kolbeinn Simundson and the late Mrs. Simundson of Seattle, Wash.

IN THE NEWS



Richard Beck Jr., son of Dr. Richard Beck and his wife Bertha Beck of Grand Forks, N. D., won a \$100.00 prize for a Model Car which he entered in a Model Car competition, sponsored by the Fisher Body Craftsmen's Guild of Detroit, for high school boys. Richard is 15 years of age, this was the second prize in the junior boys division, from North Dakota.

Mrs. B. V. Isfeld attended the convention of the Canadian Music Teachers Association at Banff in July last. She met on behalf of the Manitoba Provincial Registered Music Teachers Association, of which organization she is vice-president. She was also representing the President, Russell Standing, who was unable to be present, and she delivered his message as well as a paper of her own. She conducted the concerts of the Manitoba organization. There were artists from all over Canada attending this convention, among them being Mrs. Irene Thorolfson, and Mrs. Rose Hermannson Vernon of Winnipeg.

★

MELSTED APPOINTED

Gordon Melsted has been appointed assistant Secretary to the Equitable Life Insurance Co. of Iowa, he is a native of Iceland, came to Winnipeg with his parents, where he received his education. Gordon has served with this company since 1926, and has been in charge of rewriting ever since 1927. Gordon is an associate in the American Institute of Actuaries. He is the son of S. W. Melsted, and the late Mrs. Melsted of Winnipeg.



Miss Donna Torfason was crowned as the Queen of the Scandinavian Midsummer Festival in Vancouver, B. C. She is a daughter of Sigurdur Torfason and his wife Margret (Sigurdson) formerly of Arborg, Man.

★

A STUDENT OF DISTINCTION

A young man who came from Iceland to America in pursuit of further learning has just graduated from State Agricultural College, Fargo, North Dakota, with great distinction.

A graduate of the Agricultural School at Hólar in Hjaltadal, Iceland, **Einar I. Siggeirsson** enrolled in State Agricultural College in 1944, and graduated last June with a Bachelor of Agricultural Science degree. During the summer of each student year Einar took practical courses at the North Dakota Experimental Stations in Fargo and Langdon. He also travelled through Western Canada in 1946 to acquaint himself with Canadian agricultural methods, spending some time at the Universities of Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

From the State College of North Dakota, Einar takes home with him a gold cup for agriculture and the North Dakota Shepherd's Staff, an award for his studies in the science of sheep-raising. In competition with seven hundred fellow students, he wrote an essay which won first place and a prize of \$50.00. He has also been elected to the Alpha Zeta Honorary Fraternity of Agriculture, an outstanding honor. He occupied an important place in the school's Nature Study Society in 1947-48, and sat on the executive of the Agricultural Exhibition of the college in 1948.

Einar still continues his studies at State College, aiming toward a Master's Degree in Agriculture.

★



Miss Halldora K. Sigurdson, a former teacher at the school for the Deaf and Blind in Vancouver, graduated this Spring with honours in special studies in her field at the University of Southern California.

Miss Sigurdson will continue research on new techniques in teacher training methods and toward a master's degree in speech.

She is preparing manuscripts for a series of motion pictures designed to teach the deaf and hard of hearing.

Miss Sigurdson is the daughter of the late Guttormur Sigurdson and Mrs. Gudrun Sigurdson, now resident in Vancouver. The family lived for some time in North Dakota, but moved to Arborg, Man., around 1900, later moving to Vancouver. Miss Sigurdson has shown that she is a student of character and perseverance by working her way to her present position entirely on her own resources.



Ragnar H. Ragnar, pianist and teacher left for Iceland with his family late in July. He will take on a position with the Icelandic government as Director of Music at the school in Ísafjörður. Ragnar was well known in musical circles in Winnipeg, and for many years conducted the Winnipeg Icelandic Male Voice Choir, he also trained childrens choirs here. He served with the American Forces in Iceland during the war, and since his return to civilian life has taught music and conducted choirs in the district of Gardar and Mountain, N. D.



A GRAND 'THANK YOU'

Three thousand residents of the New Iceland districts gave tangible expression to their regard and gratitude to **Dr. Steinn O. Thompson** and his wife at a gathering in Hnausa Park.

Although the couple's silver wedding anniversary doesn't fall until October 3rd this year, that was the excuse chosen for the celebration. By every conceivable means of transportation they arrived—the fishermen, farmers, storekeepers and other folk—to raise their voices in a joined 'Thank you for what you have done for us, Steini.'

Steinn O. Thompson was born 55

years ago in Selkirk, Man., the son of Sveinn Tómasson and his wife, Sigurlaug (Steinsdóttir). He attended Selkirk schools and the University of Manitoba. After serving in the first World War he returned to practice medicine in the districts surrounding his birthplace. At that time he was the only doctor within a radius of 60 miles. Administering to



the sick at Hnausa, Gimli, Arborg, Husavik, Shorncliffe, Big Island and other villages, he would travel by boat, snowplane or on horseback, often over almost impassable roads, in all seasons and any kind of weather. Frequently he drove 85 miles to Winnipeg with a patient who needed treatment. His only neglect was in sending bills to people he considered unable to pay them. As M.L.A. for Gimli District, he has always kept the people's interest at heart.

All this and more was remembered at the celebration in Hnausa Park, and verbal expressions of gratitude were backed by handsome gifts, such as a brand new Ford car and a grandfather clock, leaving a surplus of the money

subscribed, with which it is planned to buy a refrigerator for the Thompsons.

Because they know their doctor so well, it wasn't too much of a surprise to his friends when he turned spontaneously to the crowd and announced: "I'll keep the car, but I'll put the amount of money that it cost into a trust fund toward the first hospital for this district."

Dr. and Mrs. Thompson have four children. John is attending Manitoba Medical College, Dorothy is doing social work in Winnipeg and Margaret is in training at Winnipeg General Hospital, and Robert Kenneth at home.



An Icelandic woman, **Mrs. Dora S. Lewis**, professor of Home Economics at Hunter College, New York, left this summer for Tokyo to take up her appointment for the American Forces of Occupation in Japan, as Director of Education in their program of educational rehabilitation.



ASS'T. CONSULAR CHIEF

Mr. Bent G. Sivertz, who is assistant chief of the Canadian Consular Service, has recently set up the Canadian Consulate General in San Francisco.

Mr. Sivertz, a graduate of the University of B. C., was born at Victoria, B. C., the fourth son of Christian Sivertz, now of London, Ont., and the late Mrs. Sivertz.

Being a naval reservist in 1939 and being a practical sailor, holding a coastal as well as deep-sea Mate's certificate, he was called for active service in the RCN while attending the UBC. He served until July 1946, on the Pacific and the Atlantic coasts.

During most of this time he was engaged in teaching navigation and was head of the Officers' Training

School at Halifax from Sept. 1944 until it was closed in 1945. He was awarded the OBE for efficient and meritorious service.

In 1946 Mr. Sivertz joined the department of External Affairs and was for over a year in charge of Passports Division.

As assistant chief of the Canadian Consular Service he has now set up three Consulates in the U.S., namely at Chicago, Detroit and San Francisco. The last named being opened in July this year with a staff of eight.

He is at present preparing for the opening of a Canadian Consulate at Boston.

In July Mr. Sivertz was married in San Francisco to Barbara Prael of Portland. His picture appears in our 'War Effort' section of this issue.



One of the 36 scholarship awards given this year by the Hotelman's Ass'n to veterans or sons and daughters of veterans was won by **Irene S. Sigurdson** of Gimli, Man. The amount is \$350.



J. M. BJARNASON MONUMENT

On July 25th, a monument was unveiled in Elfros, Sask., at the resting place of the well known author **Jóhann Magnús Bjarnason**. A service and the unveiling took place at the graveside in Elfros cemetery, but owing to inclement weather the main part of the ceremony took place in Elfros church.

Dr. R. Marteinsson and Dr. Austman unveiled the monument. Mrs. Rosa Vernon sang "Vögguljóð", poem by J. M. B. and music by Jón Friðfinnsson. Speakers were Dr. K. J. Austman, Dr. R. Marteinsson and Dr. R. Beck. The Icelandic Ladies' Aid of Elfros served refreshments to all those present, — about two hundred people.

FIVE BJORNSONS HONOURED

Recently the First District of the Minnesota Editorial Association awarded honorary degrees to seven Minnesota newspaper men. To that little honour list, five were chosen from the remarkable Bjornson family. They were Gunnar Bjornson, veteran publisher and editor of the Minneota Mascot, and his four sons, Hjalmar, Valdimar, Bjorn and Jon.

At the beginning of the century Gunnar Bjornson broke sod in the newspaper field in Lyon County, and his four boys grew into the profession with a natural aptitude. Until 1944, when they sold the enterprise, the Minneota Mascot was their family affair.

The Bjornsons no longer pull as a single team on a family newspaper. Hjalmar is a member of the editorial page staff of the Minneapolis Tribune; Valdimar is associate editor of the St. Paul Dispatch Pioneer; Bjorn holds a position with the National Broadcasting Co., and Jon is engaged in advertising.

Says the Minneapolis Tribune: "In all of the five Bjornsons there was a deep pride in the Minneota community, and a fine sense of editorial responsibility to it. They wrote well; they maintained high standards of professional integrity; they read avidly, with a sharp hunger for good books."

**AUTHOR RETURNS TO ICELAND**

Frú Elinborg Lárusdóttir, well known Icelandic author left for Iceland in September after visiting for four months in this country. While here she visited a number of the Icelandic districts, notably Lundar, Dakota, New

Iceland, and the West coast, giving in all about 8 lectures and addresses about Iceland. The rest of the time she spent visiting her relatives in Winnipeg, the Peturssons, being the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Olafur Petursson.

The day before her departure Rev. and Mrs. P. M. Petursson entertained at a luncheon in her honor at the Hudson's Bay club rooms. There she gave her farewell message and bade good bye to some of the many friends she had acquired while here.

**MASTER OF SCIENCE**

Frederick Karl Kristjanson received his M.Sc. degree from the University of Minnesota this spring. During the summer with his wife he visited his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Jakob Kristjanson in Winnipeg, and has now returned to Minneapolis where he will continue in his position as Assistant in the Research Dept., of the university and also study for his Ph.D. On graduating from the U. of M. (1947) he was winner of the University Gold Medal.

**THOROLFSON HONORED**

For the second consecutive year, Frank Thorolfson, formerly of Winnipeg, has been awarded the Oliver Ditson scholarship by the Chicago Musical College. Word was received of the award recently. Mr. Thorolfson will continue work at the College. He is also assistant conductor of the Chicago Bach Chorus and teacher at the Metropolitan School of Music, where he coaches in composition, piano and voice. He spent a short time in Winnipeg and vicinity in late July.

The Danielson's Back from a Holiday

On the 29th of July the West Coast returned to us one of our best assets — the Danielson team. Those two — the editor and circulation manager of this magazine — then wrote a period after a five weeks' holiday in Vancouver, Victoria, Blaine and Seattle.

From casual discussion of the trip, this writer gathered that it was by no means the lazy type of holiday. Mrs. Danielson has just completed a year's work as educational director for the Icelandic National League, and it is quite apparent that she stayed right in that role while she journeyed amongst our people at the West Coast.

She had been invited to speak at the annual concert of the Chapter "Strönd-in", Icelandic National League, on June 25th. She also gave a talk on Iceland at the Old Folks Home in Vancouver, and, at the invitation of the Committee, was guest speaker at the Icelandic Celebration in Blaine, Washington. The Vancouver Province published a picture of her on the speaker's platform and an account of her address.

Mrs. Danielson made twenty-one visits to chapters of the Icelandic National League in Manitoba and at the West Coast during the year. She has organized choral groups and Icelandic language groups, and revitalized others that were having a struggle to survive.

Wherever she went, Mrs. Danielson found sincere and ardent workers who gave unstintingly of their time and talents to further this cultural work. They were the souls of hospitality, whole-hearted in their co-operation and warmly inspired by this show of interest and encouragement by the parent organization. She has kept in close contact with the voluntary workers in the field and has deep sense of satisfaction with the results of her work. She feels that if this work is continued it will serve to co-ordinate the efforts of the various chapters, and make them a truly integral part of the League, striving toward the common goal of conserving for all time what we deem good in our cultural heritage.

C. G.

The Icelandic Canadian

A Quarterly Magazine

Published by the Icelandic Canadian Club, Winnipeg, Manitoba

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PJÓÐRÆKNISFÉLAG ÍSLENDINGA, Kjartansgötu 4,
Reykjavík Iceland

Icelandic Canadian Club News

The annual meeting of the Icelandic Canadian Club was held at the First Federated church parlors, June 21.

The treas., Steinunn Bjarnason reported a balance in the bank of \$242.30. Miss S. Eydal of the membership committee reported 19 new members during the year.

Reports were given on the following projects:

Music Committee, Mrs. L. Gudmunds:

Sixty-one letters have been sent out, with the result that the committee has received from 18 composers 36 compositions, and 9 published volumes of music containing 150 compositions. At the May concert 15 composers were presented on the program and works of 5 composers were performed at two club meetings. A short biographical sketch of all these composers had been given. Mrs. Gudmunds gave a paper on "History of Icelandic Music".

Social Committee, Mrs. Kay Palmer:

who took over when Mrs. Ena Anderson moved to Vancouver, reported 3 social meetings and a Tombola. She also reported that Mr. and Mrs. Baldwin, Agnes St. had given a very enjoyable reception after the concert May 10th, in honor of the visiting and local artists on the program, where over 70 people were present. She moved a vote of thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Baldwin.

Icel. Can. Evening School,

W. Kristjanson:

conducted a reading group of 12 members, and during the year the works of six Icel.-Can. poets and authors were read at meetings of the group,

and discussed. Two excellent lectures had been given at club meetings: "Laxdæla" by Prof. Skuli Johnson and "History of Icel. Pioneers in Winnipeg", by J. J. Bildfell.

Iceland's Thousand Years,

Mrs. H. F. Danielson:

reported a balance of \$460 in the bank and 500 krónur just received from Iceland for the sale of 50 books which had been sent there on request. These 50 books sold at the Keflavík Airport in less than 2 weeks.

Icel. Canadian Magazine,

Reports were given by Mrs. Holmfridur Danielson, Mrs. Grace Thorsteinson and Mr. H. F. Danielson, showing that the magazine has almost doubled its size from the time it started, with articles and news from all over America, and further afield; with a balance in the bank of \$1,617.64; and with 155 new subscribers this year which is more than 50% higher than ever before.

Community Hall,

Paul Bardal:

reported on attending meetings with the committee of the Icel. Nat. League which is handling this project. In conclusion he moved that: In view of the fact that the League, in convention last February had given its Executive authority to sell the J. B. building if opportunity offered and also to take an option on a building lot, the Icelandic Canadian Club is willing to give this work full support, as lies within its power, commencing at such a time as the League sees fit to launch the pro-

ject of building the Community Hall. This resolution was unanimously passed.

Election of Officers:

Pres., Axel Vopnfjord; vice pres., W. Kristjanson; Sec., Mattie Halldorson; Treas., Villa Eyjolfson. Executive committee: Dr. L. A. Sigurdson, Paul Bardal, Mrs. B. S. Benson, Lilja Guttormson, Caroline Gunnarson. Social committee: Mrs. Kay Palmer, Helga Eggertson, Mrs. G. Gunnlaugson, John K. Laxdal. Membership: Stefania Eydal, Steina Johnson, Jonas Jonasson.

Magazine:

Editorial Board: Holmfridur Daniel-

son, chairman, Judge W. J. Lindal, Prof. T. J. Oleson, H. Thorgrimson and Halldor Stefanson. News editors: S. Eydal and C. Gunnarson. War Effort, editor, Mattie Halldorson. Business manager, Grace Thorsteinson. Circulation manager: H. F. Danielson.

At the annual meeting a hearty thanks was voted to Axel Vopnfjord for his fine service on the editorial board. He retired — temporarily, we hope, — finding it impossible to continue on the board and serve as the club's president as well.

Lilja Guttormson, Sec.

Einar Hjörleifsson Kvaran in Winnipeg

(Continued from page 10)

Og við bárum makalaust hátt okkar
hatt

En höfðum ei þrek til að tala satt
Nema fullir og fjúkandi reiðir.

In this issue too Einar published the first instalment of his short story *Félagsskapurinn í Þorbrandsstaðarhreppi* which appeared as a serial in four numbers of the paper. It is a humorous indictment of the bickering between individuals and factions in a community in Iceland; it served to establish Einar's reputation as a keen critic of the foibles of his fellow countrymen. Einar had previously read publicly portions of the story in his inimitable manner. Indeed it soon became suspected that this entrancing public entertainer and actor was constantly poking fun at his Icelandic associates. Hence it was that when Einar in the summer of 1888 gave two public readings of his translation of the *Public Life of Nich-*

olas Tulrumble by Charles Dickens (published in Bentley's Miscellany, January 1837) it was believed by some of Einar's touchy confreres that he was poking fun at them and their few men of means and at Winnipeg as a modern town of Mudfog. Rev. F. J. Bergmann notes this childish sensitivity of the young Icelandic community and its inability to endure criticism. Yet in spite of this the Icelandic colony in Winnipeg was enthralled by Einar and as events show, nothing appeared capable of achievement without his assistance.

8.

In the assessment roll of Winnipeg for 1887 Einar Kvaran is listed as "gent" living at 155 William Street West (=543 William Ave. The house is the fifth east of Kate street on the north side). But evidently Einar was a gentleman of meagre means. On Oct. 7, 1886

(Heimskr. I. 5) he advertises himself as a tutor in Icelandic, Universal History, Geography and Arithmetic, etc., 7-9 every evening except Sunday, if a sufficient number were to ask for tuition. In the 7th number the advertisement becomes a joint one with Sigurður Jónasson and English is added to the list of subjects. This notice continued in Heimskr. down to Dec. 9, 1886.

Other indications of Einar's impeccability may be briefly stated. (1) In his poem **Endurminningar** (Lögb. Oct. 15, 1892 in memory of Gestur Pálsson there is a general admission of poverty in the sixth stanza. (2) Kvaran stated in his controversy with F. B. Anderson that he had attempted to coerce him when he knew he was financially weak. In 1891 when Kvaran withdrew from Löberg he was to get a minor post with the Immigration office. (3) Although the assessment roll shows that five persons were domiciled at Kvaran's home on William Ave., Kvaran rented out rooms in the evening there to Dr. Ólafur Stephensen. (4) Kvaran applied for and obtained the power to take affidavits (Lögb. May 21, 1892). (5) Kvaran published and sold, through the book-shop of W. H. Paulson and Co., 575 Main St.: **Vonir** 1890 (25 cents per copy); **Kóngurinn í Gullá**, 1891 (15 cents per copy); **Ljóðmæli** 1893 (50 cents per copy; Lögb. Dec. 16, 1893 declares that these poems by Kvaran make a nice Christmas present). (6) On June 8, 1887 Kvaran is to begin his lectures on American History (Heimskr. I. 23 June 2); the admission is to be 10 cents per lecture for those who have not a ticket for the entire series. (It should however be added in all fairness that Kvaran normally received no share in the receipts from cencerts in which he participated).

9.

Various activities of Kvaran in 1886-1887 may at this point be briefly listed. They indicate clearly his sense of public service. (1) Oct. 15, 1886 Kvaran along with F. B. Anderson and B. L. Baldwin represented the Framfarafjelag at a joint meeting of the representatives of various local associations and of the railways, to discuss matter affecting immigration, and to facilitate the reception of newcomers. (2) Oct. 25, 1886 Heimskringla (I. 8) refers to a speech by Kvaran at a recent meeting of the Framfarafjelag on the subject **Um Sjálfstæði**. (3) Nov. 6, 1886, at a meeting of the same society Kvaran participated in a concert under the chairmanship of Eyjólfur Eyjólfsson; the admission was 35 cents and the receipts were reported as being \$26.10 (Heimskr. I. 9). (4) Nov. 27, 1886, an election meeting was held in the house of the Framfarafjelag; the invitation to this meeting, which was a Liberal rally, was signed by Páll Bardal, Árni Friðriksson, Einar Hjörleifsson and Sigtr. Jónasson. — (Heimskr. I. 10). (5) May 2, 1887 Kvaran lectured for the Íslendingafjelag on **What Books Should We Read?** The lecture was deemed good but was poorly attended owing to inclement weather. (Heimskr. I. 17. April 21 had originally announced the lecture but for some reason the date of delivery was postponed). (6) June 21 and 23, 1887, Kvaran took part in a discussion on **What can the Lutheran Synod Do to Educate the Icelandic General Public?** He emphasized the teaching of general history and poetry, in accordance with sound Icelandic tradition (Heimskr. I. 30, July 21). (7) Sept. 12, 1887 he participated in a general meeting which discussed the famine situation in Iceland (Heimskr. I. 39).

10.

Dramatics continued to receive attention from Kvaran. Nov. 8, 10 and 11 **Hermannaglettur** was played; on the 10th an additional piece **Sambíðlarnir** was presented (*Heimskr.* I. 46, Nov. 10, declares that Kvaran and Jón Blöndal were the life of the play as before during the winter. Other items in reference to Kvaran's dramatic work are the following: (1) Lögb. Feb. 14, 1894 declared that Einar played the part of Kranz Kammerrað excellently in a presentation of *Ævintýri á Gönguför* (translated from the play of C. Nestroy). (2) Kvaran directed the training of the Icelandic Dramatic Society for the presentation of the same play to be performed Nov. 17 and 22 in Unity Hall, cor. of Pacific and Nena, admission 25 cents; 20 cents for children. Lögb. 17. Nov., declared that Kvaran played Kranz as well as ever. The critic on both occasions signed himself H. P. (in all likelihood Hafsteinn Pjetursson). (3) The Icelandic Dramatic Society purchased from Matth. Jochumsson his revised edition of *Skuggasveinn* (Lögb. Jan. 12, 1895). The play was announced to be played in Unity Hall Jan. 19, 22, 24, 26, the scenic effects by Fred Swanson (Lögb. Jan. 16, 1895). H. P. criticized the presentation (Lögb. Jan. 24, 1895). He says that Kvaran played the role of Grímur excellently but found some fault with the acting of Þorbergur Fjelsted. Kvaran in a short article *Lítill Athugasemd* (Lögb. Jan. 31, 1895) shows that Fjelsted's interpretation of his part was in accordance with intention of the playwright. (4) In 1895 two productions of **Hermannaglettur** in Unity Hall brought in \$100.30 for the poor relief committee of the Icelandic community (Lögb. April 11, 1895). Whether Kvaran took part in this is uncertain.

The influence of Kvaran on amateur theatricals in various Icelandic districts in Canada is clearly seen in **Leiksýningar Vestur Íslendinga** by Árni Sigurðsson (*Tímarit Þjóðræknisfélags Íslendinga*, Vol. 28, 1947, pp 89-110). Of his four dramas **Lénharður Fógeti** (1913); **Syndir Annara** (1915) **Hafsteinn og Dóra** (1931) and **Jósaphat** (1932) the first two have been presented on the stage in western communities.

11.

There is no doubt that Kvaran, owing to his liberal views and also because of his differences with F. B. Anderson, was active in the establishment of another weekly newspaper, **Lögberg**. Its publishers were listed thus: Sigtr. Jónasson; J. Bergvin Jónsson; Árni Friðriksson; Einar Hjörleifsson; Ólafur S. Þorgeirsson and Sig. J. Jóhannesson. There is no evidence to show that *Heimskringla* had closed its columns to any political opponents but after **Lögberg** came forward, as the alleged successor of the defunct **Leifur**, party-lines in local Icelandic journalism came to be more rigidly drawn. Supporters of the older paper rightly claimed that **Lögberg** was intended to destroy it, while the adherents of the new publication aggressively attempted to preempt the entire field, and indeed for a while came near to success. Rev. F. J. Bergmann thought that Kvaran put no money into the **Lögberg** enterprise, and that Sigtr. Jónasson was the only one of the six original publishers who did. The surmise about Kvaran is probably sound, but surely Árni Friðriksson (who became the president of the **Lögberg** Company) and Bergvin Jónsson, who both were in business, must have made some money advances. Kvaran was to provide the editorial leadership, while Þorgeirsson

who had learned the printing trade at Akureyri, and had come to Winnipeg in the fall of 1887, was to have the presswork in hand. Þorgeirsson was an ideal printer, and during his long sojourn in Winnipeg, played an outstanding part in Icelandic journalism. Sig. J. Jóhannesson was a minor poet and of little significance in the Lögberg venture. His undertaking business was a precursor of that of Bardal. Kvaran's activities during his tenure of the editorship of Lögberg are so varied that some grouping of them must be tentatively made. (1) Editorial and features articles; (2) polemical writings; (3) occasional speeches and recitals; (4) reviews; (5) poetry; (6) translations and (7) stories.

12.

In his editorial position Kvaran had an excellent opportunity to support worth-while causes and to advocate meritorious matters. Some of these may here be rapidly passed in review. Kvaran became the spokesman for Icelandic immigrants to Canada against press attacks on them in Iceland Ben. Gröndal received well-deserved attention from Kvaran in this regard and there were others. Kvaran criticized severely the conditions of church and state in the homeland objecting particularly to the treatment meted out to Matth. Jochumsson by the former, and that to J. Ólafsson by the latter. He criticized just as keenly the short-comings of Icelanders as he finds them in America. In general he supports all worth-while objectives; he promotes the cause of religion as he finds it in the organized Lutheran Church, though he is not officially a member of it; he aids the pioneering Icelandic temperance movement, and though he finds much in the temperance advocacy that is wrong-

headed, he and his second wife are among the founders of temperance lodges. He is a keen advocate of education for young and old; he holds that the Lutheran Church should found a school for Icelandic folk and that Icelandic children should make full use of the public school facilities afforded in the city. He advocates further good concerts and dramatics; he denounces excesses of every kind; even the ineptitude of contributors to programs is an anathema to him. He detests fanaticism whether it is found in the Kate Street Chapel or in antics of the Salvation Army which he deems, despite its kindly intent and charitable doings, as insufferably vulgar. Everywhere Kvaran by precept and performance is an advocate of good taste, genteel manners and sound common sense. His influence was not limited to the Winnipeg colony, for he visited from time to time other Icelandic settlements, even the remote Þingvallanylenda (in 1890) which J. Ólafson in derision had called "Lackwaterland". Moreover everywhere even his adversaries read eagerly everything he wrote in his paper.

13.

An editorial by Kvaran called *Íslendingar í Ameríku* (Lögb. III. 13-14-16, April 9, 16, 30, 1890) is a typical one. He holds that their objective is to become good citizens in the new land and that the right method for achieving that end is to be found in the maximum co-operation of local Icelanders in their own organizations. He believes that thus the Icelandic immigrant will gain his greatest development as an individual. Another editorial of his entitled *Mentun og Mentunarfæri* (Lögb. III. 36-38, Sept. 17, 24, Oct. 1, 1890) discusses such important matters as the public school and college

and the new natural science and psychology. Kvaran here analyzes the concept of education and deals with the relation between knowledge and the life of the spirit. A short editorial on **Hörmulegt Slys** (*Lögb.* April 8, 1893) is one of the many appeals that Kvaran made in support of the unfortunate. On April 6, there had been an accident at Point Douglas near Ogilvie's mill where a ditch had caved in and killed one Icelander and injured others seriously. (The dead man was Benjamin Jónasson, who left a wife and three children; the injured were: Árni Þórðarsson; Ólafur Hannesson and Helgi Eggertsson. Of these Þórðarsson, now in his eighties is a hardy pensioner at the Old Folks' Home in Gimli). Kvaran contends that if Icelanders in America could afford to subscribe money to bring Matth. Jochumsson to the World's Fair in Chicago, they should and could contribute to the aid of these local unfortunates who were nearer home and more deserving.

14.

Kvaran found newspaper controversies uncongenial. He was not naturally disposed to take up the cudgels, except under compulsion; then he could indeed be devastatingly effective. The most arresting instance of his effectiveness in this regard that appeared in *Lögberg* during his days as editor are **Sameiningin í Vígamóð** (*Lögberg III*, 41, Oct 22, 1890) and **Tuddinn** (*Lögb.*, Aug. 12 1891). The former is a reply to Rev. Jón Bjarnason, whom personally Kvaran much admired at this time, as his sketch of him in the periodical **Sunnanfari** (April 10, 1892) shows. What he thought of him and his theology later one can readily surmise: Kvaran undoubtedly sympathized keenly with the cause of Rev. F. J.

Bergmann that later divided Icelandic Lutheranism in America. **Tuddinn**, (*The Boor*) is a rejoinder to Jón Ólafsson a rival journalist who never pulled his punches; Kvaran's indictment of him is the most personal polemic that he ever wrote.

Two other feature editorials may be mentioned, one on religion, the other on politics. In his **Svar til Kirkjublaðsins** (*Lögb.* Nov. 23 and 26, 1892) Kvaran replies to a criticism in the organ of the church in Iceland penned by its editor Rev. Þórhallur Bjarnarson who later became the Bishop of Iceland. Kvaran in writing a literary review of a book **Ofan úr Sveitum** by Þorgils gjallandi (*Lögb.* Aug. 13, 1892) had slipped in a paragraph that was critical of the spirit of the Icelandic church. This brief encounter with the editor of the **Kirkjublað** is interesting because Rev. Jón Bjarnason, at a later time, charged Kvaran with having become the dictator of the clergy in Iceland. The political editorial **Friðnum Slitið** (*Lögb.* March 4, 1891) was the sequel to a famous Liberal meeting held in connection with the candidature of Isaac Campbell against H. J. Macdonald in the Dominion elections of 1891. At a meeting of Icelandic electors Kvaran, Jón Ólafsson and Gestur Pálsson had spoken. The last named, who had spoken for the Conservative opposition and was the editor of *Heimskringla* revoked the truce between Kvaran and himself because of caustic remarks addressed to him by Kvaran at this meeting. Kvaran and Pálsson were old friends and had much in common as men of letter and Kvaran's tribute to Pálsson, in the poem **Endurminningar** and elsewhere, serves to balance the account between them.

(Concluded in next issue)

MEDICAL FELLOWSHIPS

The National Research Council has awarded Medical Fellowships from \$1500 to \$2500 to 31 graduates in medicine to enable them to pursue post-graduate research during 1948-49.

The grantees represent ten different universities including one in Australia and one in England. The fellowship holders will carry on their research investigations at eight universities. Six of these research centres are located in Canada, one in England, and one in Zurich, Switzerland. Distribution of the awards by the universities at which they will be held is as follows: McGill, 8; Montreal, 1; Queen's, 4; Toronto, 7; Western Ontario, 8; Manitoba, 1; Oxford, Engl., 1; Zurich, Switzerland, 1.

The Division of Medical Research of the National Research Council also makes Grants-in-Aid to Canadian universities for medical research studies on approved subjects. During the present year 118 such grants valued at \$264,173 are being held. Nominal value of the 31 medical fellowships awarded this year is \$64,600.

HUNDREDTH BIRTHDAY

Páll Jónsson, pioneer in New Iceland celebrated his 100th birthday this year. He was born at Miðvatni, Skagafjörður, Iceland, Aug. 20, 1848. His parents were Jón Pálsson and his wife Margrét Halldórsdóttir. In 1879 he was married to Sigríður Ólafsdóttir, and they came to Canada in 1883, and pioneered in the Geysir district, where he still lives with his son Wilhelm.

Páll is still hale and hearty, enjoys good hearing and fair eyesight. He likes to visit with his children, Mrs. S Indridason, Selkirk, and Thorgrimur and Larus, who farm near Arborg, Man. There are 23 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren.

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